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WHERE ARE THE DEMOCRATIC MODERATES?
PETER BEINART

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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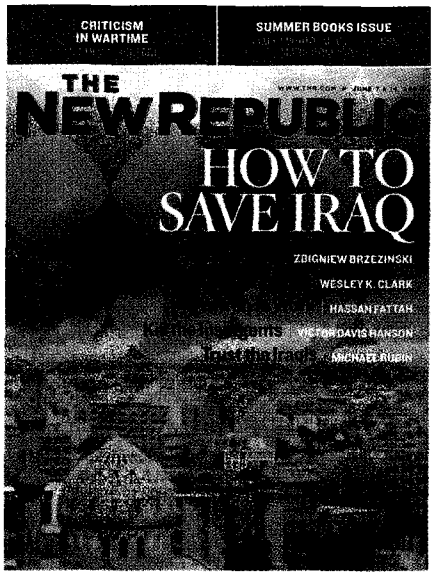

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON'S SOLUTION for saving Iraq stood out among the prescriptive essays as the most ill-reasoned and short-sighted ("Stop Talking," June 7 & 14). He wants to revert to the halcyon days of the U.S. invasion and to use force, force, and more force. There is some sense to this, since this is the one thing our military does very well. But events have shown that this approach doesn't work. And for Hanson to claim that we need to use all of our troops to do the very thing they've already been doing is not a solution at all. What's more, he thinks we don't need any more soldiers than we currently have in Iraq—"138,000 rapidly responding soldiers," not "200,000 or so garrison troops." This suggests that, if we think of our mission in Iraq as nation-building, we will lose the war. With such an outlook, one wonders at what point nation-building will start and fighting the war will end. It seems that the two must co-exist, but Hanson suggests that, to win the war, we must focus solely on winning the war, as if winning the war doesn't involve a stable Iraq.

Hanson's most short-sighted proposal would let "admittedly unreliable Iraqi troops" use "U.S. tanks, airpower, and artillery." This seems like an excellent way to further divide Iraqis and a horrible way to transfer power. There are two issues here. First, why would it make sense to allow poorly trained soldiers to do the work of the U.S. military? The only reason seems to be that, by using U.S. guns and tanks, the Iraqi soldiers will improve. But this is naïve. Second, this strategy would just serve to further divide Iraqis. Take the situation in Falluja: If we had put our fire power in the hands of Iraqis, it might have been turned against us. If we let Baathists under the hoods of Abrams tanks and let them handle Moqtada Al Sadr's militia, then would the rest of the Shia bow in the face of this overwhelming force? I think not; it would serve only to usher in what some cynics see as an inevitable civil war.

CASEY WOODLING
Gainesville, Florida

PRIVATE PRACTICE

ALTHOUGH MERIT, RATHER THAN lineage, may now constitute the basis for admission to elite colleges, as Alan Brinkley claims in his review of *The Guardians: Kingman Brewster, His Circle, and the Rise of the Liberal Establishment*, culture and class still play a powerful role ("The End of an Elite," June 7 & 14). If they didn't, private schools would cease to exist because parents would gladly send their children to local public schools in order to save on the skyrocketing cost of tuition. Instead, more than five million students, or about 10 percent of this country's school-age population, are enrolled in private schools. Even when parents have the opportunity to send their children to excellent local public schools, they opt for private schools for reasons of social elitism or separatism. They choose to isolate their children from those of other races or backgrounds or to boast about the status symbol that a private school represents. None of this is to diminish what Kingman Brewster accomplished as president of Yale against formidable opposition from the Yale Corporation and from alumni, particularly in light of his own privileged background. But tradition dies hard, and much more needs to be done today to equalize opportunities for all students.

WALT GARDNER
Los Angeles, California

HOUSE ARREST

AT THE END OF HIS ILLUMINATING piece on Barack Obama, Noam Scheiber, noting the dearth of other candidates with African names and *Harvard Law Review* pedigrees, suggests that there will likely not be many other successful black candidates winning major office any time soon ("Race Against History," May 31). While Obama is indeed unusual, there is another obstacle standing in the way of aspiring black politicians that Scheiber does not note. That obstacle is the practice of racial gerrymandering used to draw the boundaries of congressional districts. While racial gerrymandering has been quite successful at producing many black congressmen, it may have actually contributed to the dearth of black senators and governors. By lumping black voters in black-only enclaves, mapmakers have essentially ensured that black representatives will have tremendous difficulty winning the support of white, working-class voters, who make up an essential component of any statewide Democratic campaign.

In his article, Scheiber points out some differences between Obama and Carol Moseley Braun, whose former seat Obama is seeking. But both began their political careers as state legislators representing Hyde Park, the same progressive, integrated South Side neighborhood. And both were elected on

Continued on page 37

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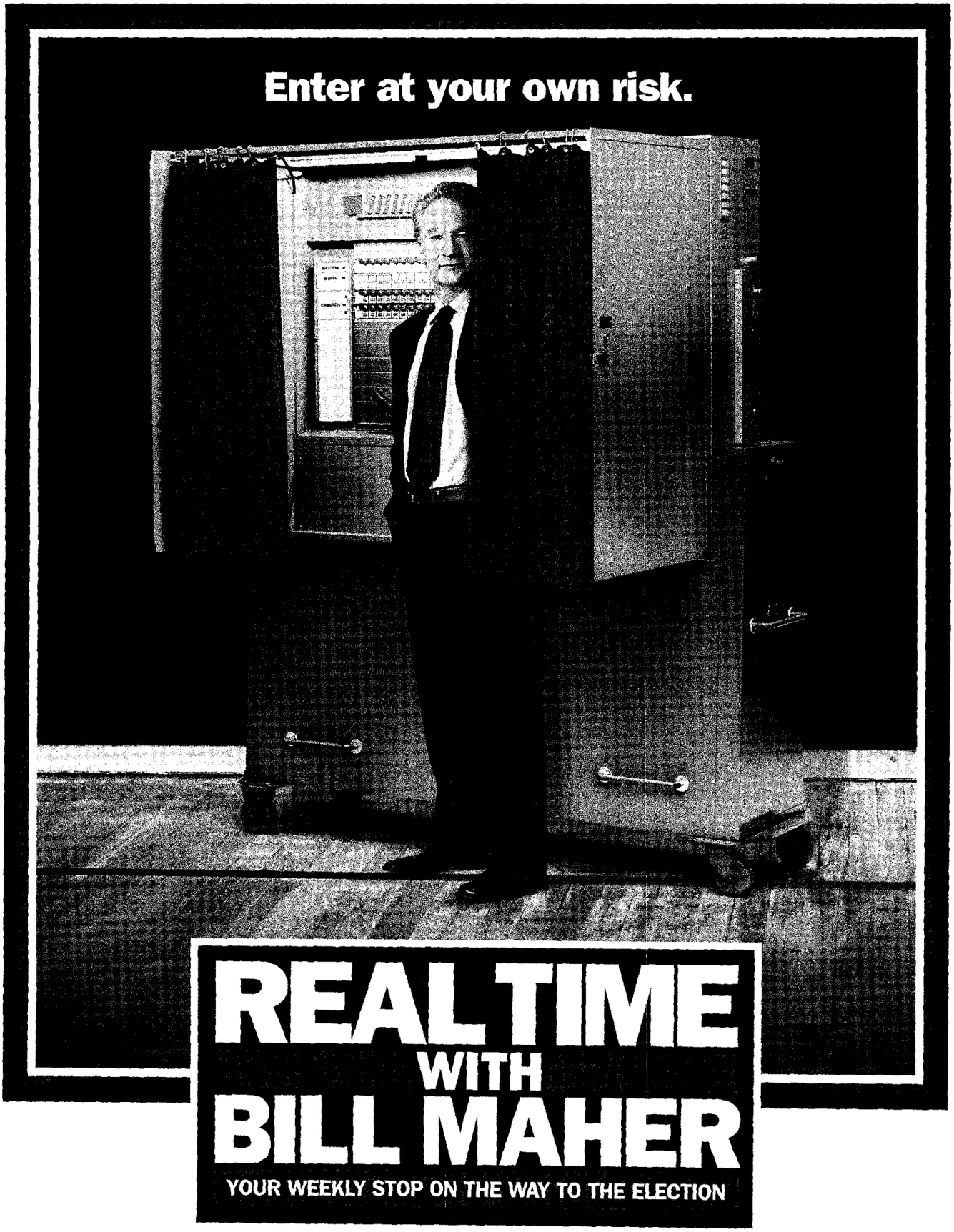

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Self Image

TRB FROM WASHINGTON

A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE Democratic convention, and a few weeks before the Republican one, the two parties' conclaves are shaping up as mirror images of one another. The Bush administration's famous cockiness notwithstanding, its upcoming convention looks like an exercise in ideological insecurity. Republican campaign officials say they want to frame the presidential race as liberal versus conservative; Dick Cheney says it offers the clearest ideological contrast since Ronald Reagan versus Walter Mondale. But, if the GOP really wanted ideological contrast, it picked the worst group of speakers imaginable.

On Monday, the convention's opening night, Republican delegates will be treated to speeches by John McCain, Rudy Giuliani, and New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Bloomberg is a liberal who agrees far more with John Kerry than with George W. Bush. On economic and cultural policy, McCain has, in recent years, become a liberal—which is why Kerry could seriously contemplate him as a running mate. And Giuliani, despite his tough-guy reputation, is at least as liberal as Kerry on abortion, immigration, and gay rights—and not far from him on economics either. (He never seriously cut government as mayor of New York.)

On Tuesday night, the Republicans send up Rod Paige, a living testament to the GOP's embrace of affirmative action, Laura Bush, and Arnold Schwarzenegger, a man who not only preaches cultural liberalism, but practices it. Wednesday night is Zell Miller, who is allowed to be conservative because he's a Democrat, and Cheney. Thursday is Bush himself, nominated by yet another pro–gay rights, pro-choicer, New York Governor George Pataki.

Strategically, all this is probably shrewd. But a convention that features speaker after speaker too liberal to be nominated by the assembled delegates suggests a party unwilling to reveal its true face to the nation. In their desperation, 127 House Republicans this week circulated a petition urging a speaking role for Bill Clinton impeachment manager Henry Hyde. And, as THE NEW REPUBLIC was going to press, the Bushies caved and added conservative Senators Rick Santorum and Sam Brownback, as well as House Speaker Denny Hastert, to the lineup. That should come as at least some relief to the House Republicans because, before the switch, the only speaker with really strong feelings about impeachment was Schwarzenegger—who said it made him ashamed to be a Republican.

If the Bush Republicans lack ideological self-confidence, the Kerry Democrats may have too much of it. To be sure, Kerry eschews the liberal label. And the Democratic platform is a study in moderation. But, in its choice of convention speakers, the Kerry campaign is presenting an almost shockingly realistic picture of what the Democratic Party really is. And that means liberalism is on tap virtually every night.

The festivities begin on Monday night with Jimmy Carter, who the Clinton campaign kept off stage in 1996 because of his economic and national security weaknesses. Also that night is Clinton, who the Gore campaign tried to muzzle in 2000 for fear he would alienate moderates. Joining them is Gore himself, who has moved to within ideological spitting distance of Michael Moore.

Tuesday night includes Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano, one of the few convention speakers who has shown she can win in a red state. Also speaking are Iowa First Lady Christie Vilsack, Ron Reagan, and Teresa Heinz Kerry. And then there are the ghosts of liberalism past and future: Convention keynoter Barack Obama—enormously gifted but, as my colleague Noam Scheiber has pointed out, no New Democrat ("Race Against History," May 31)—and Ted Kennedy, the living embodiment of the pre–DLC dream that (thanks partly to Kerry) has not died.

Wednesday night features two politicians smack in the Democratic mainstream: New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley, as well as a little-known retired Marine Corps lieutenant colonel turned Democratic congressional candidate named Steve Brozak. It ends with Elizabeth and John Edwards. Thursday night is given over to Kerry's family and one of his Vietnam boatmates, along with House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi. Introducing the nominee will be former Georgia Senator Max Cleland, a decent, embittered man who could teach a course on how *not* to win in a conservative state.

I doubt the Kerry campaign tried to stock the podium with liberals. They simply chose the people in the party with mass appeal, great promise, or both. Being Democrats, they tinkered to make sure no race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation was overlooked. And, this being post–September 11 America, they threw in people with military backgrounds. All this is, in its way, admirably honest. And, unsurprisingly, it produced a convention roster that looks—and sounds—like the Democratic Party.

But just because it's honest doesn't make it wise. In 1988, the Democrats picked a successful red-state governor—Bill Clinton—to give the nominating speech. In 1992, Clinton himself tapped another successful red-state governor, Zell Miller, to give a keynote. (That was before Miller morphed from a Democratic iconoclast into a Republican hack.) And in 1996, Clinton chose yet a third—Evan Bayh, then-governor (now senator) of Indiana—to give the keynote.

Each speaker was more conservative than the party's nominee. Each represented the party not as it was, but as it might have been had liberal interest groups not exercised such control over the nominating process. (In 1988, for instance, the party had not yet reconciled itself to a nominee, like Clinton, who aggressively supported the death penalty.) The Democrats didn't do what the Bush Republicans are doing this year: They didn't showcase speakers who opposed core party principles. But, for the Democratic activists assembled in 1988, 1992, and 1996, the convention speakers required a modest ideological stretch. They pushed slightly beyond the party's comfort zone and, therefore, escaped the self-congratulatory echo chamber that an activist base can so easily become. This year's Democratic delegates, by contrast, will sit through the convention speeches in utter comfort. And that comfort could make Americans around the country squirm.

PETER BEINART

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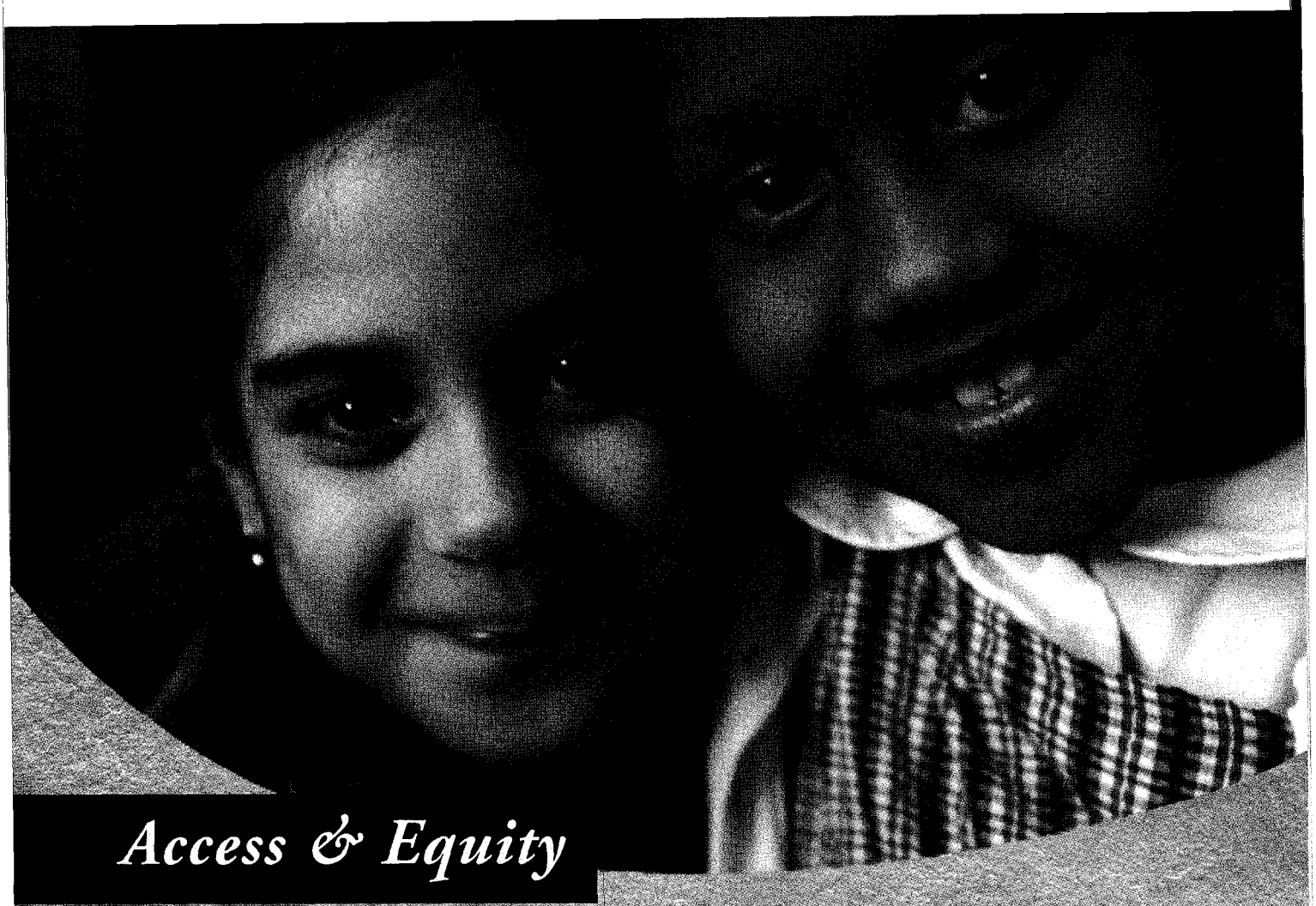

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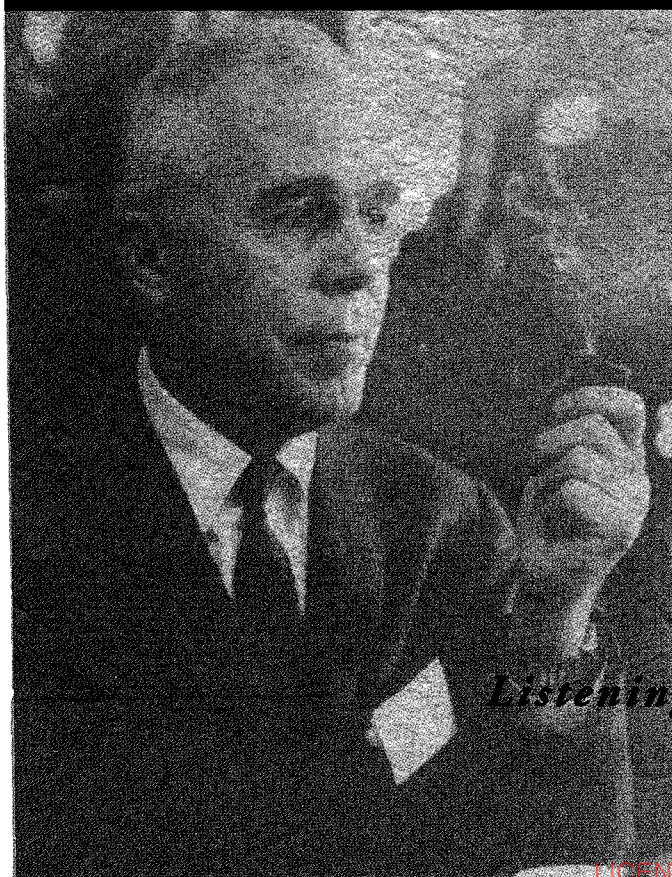

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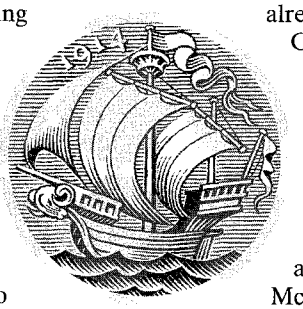
Spy v. Spy

JOHN E. MCLAUGHLIN, THE acting director of central intelligence (DCI), has a finely developed sense of irony. With the 9/11 Commission delivering its final report this week (the day after THE NEW REPUBLIC goes to press), McLaughlin took to "Fox News Sunday" to preemptively argue against one of its most important recommendations: the creation of a director of national intelligence (DNI), distinct from the CIA, to oversee the nation's 15 intelligence services. "A good argument can be made for that," he conceded, but "it doesn't relate particularly to the world I live in."

Of course it doesn't. McLaughlin is a 32-year veteran of the CIA. Ever since the 1947 National Security Act created the modern U.S. intelligence apparatus, the DCI has theoretically led the entire intelligence community while simultaneously managing one of its component agencies, the CIA. In reality, the lion's share of the DCI's attention has gone to running the CIA and not its sister organizations, a situation exacerbated by the fact that he controls only about 12 percent of a $40 billion intelligence budget—the percentage allocated to the CIA. After two catastrophic intelligence failures—September 11 and the Iraq war—attributable in no small measure to the fragmentation of the intelligence system, McLaughlin needs to live in a new world. It's time for a new intelligence czar.

A Cabinet-level intelligence chief will not be a panacea for the intelligence community's ills, but it could go a long way toward bridging the divisions between the spy agencies. Consider what happened in the run-up to September 11, 2001. After the 1998 American Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, then-DCI George Tenet declared war on Al Qaeda, circulating a directive demanding that "no resources or people [be] spared in this effort, either inside [the] CIA or the Community." But, while the CIA's Counterterrorist Center got the message, the FBI's counterterrorism chief told the joint congressional inquiry into September 11 that he "was not specifically aware of that declaration of war." And the director of the National Security Agency (NSA) added, "We had about five number-one priorities." Tenet may have technically been head of the entire intelligence community, but it seems he communicated chiefly with his home institution. As General William Odom, a former NSA director, has said, "The DCI becomes trapped if he's also directing an agency, and therefore he doesn't look at the community as much as he could." An intelligence czar would not have that problem.



But, just as the new spymaster must be responsible for the whole intelligence community, so must the community acknowledge that the intelligence czar is running the show. Right now, the largest institutional obstacle to this is the secretary of defense, who controls roughly 85 percent of the intelligence purse. To cement the new intelligence chief's authority, he (or she) should be given control of the entire intelligence budget, and the office of the undersecretary of defense for intelligence should be abolished. The czar should also be given a fixed term—one that does not coincide with each change of administration—to help shield him from political influence.

Consolidating power in this way, however, does not mean the intelligence community should be morphed into a single Cabinet department or that the new czar should function as a secretary of intelligence, running the day-to-day operations of the various agencies. At best, that would lead to an "additional layer of bureaucracy," as McLaughlin has charged, and at worst, it could produce a Frankenstein's monster of disparate parts stitched together like the Department of Homeland Security (see Michael Crowley, "Playing Defense," March 15). Instead, the new intelligence chief should set policy, provide resources, and enforce inter-community collaboration, leading the intelligence community just as the national security adviser directs the National Security Council—precisely what the 1947 National Security Act envisaged. (In fact, the institutional resources for the office of an intelligence czar already exist in the DCI's Community Management Staff, which facilitates interagency cooperation.)

It's true that some of these steps could be taken without creating a new position. The CIA director could be allotted a fixed term (as McLaughlin has suggested) and greater budgetary authority (as McLaughlin and two of his predecessors, Tenet and Robert M. Gates, have suggested). But that would still leave the CIA director in his own world, disconnected from other agencies that need his help and whose help he needs. McLaughlin may feel safe living in that world, but we don't. ■

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NOTEBOOK

THE GOP GIVES NADER A LIFT . . . AND TO THE RICH, ANOTHER TAX GIFT

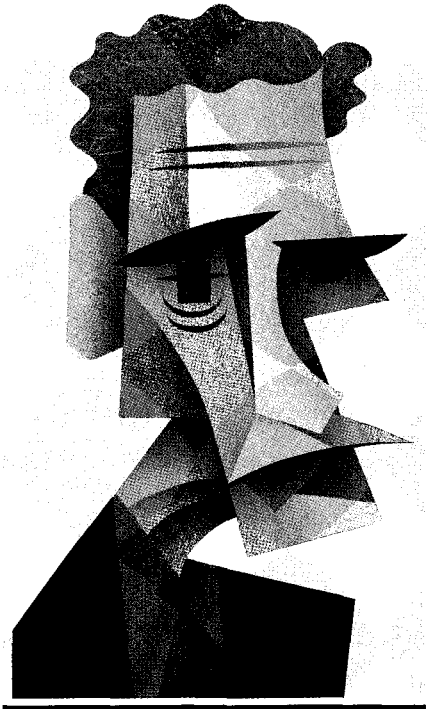
DARK HORSE OR STALKING HORSE?

RALPH NADER IS FOND OF CLAIMING that his presidential candidacy *hurts George W. Bush more than John* Kerry. When, during a recent debate, former Democratic presidential hopeful Howard Dean attacked him for accepting large donations from Republicans and relying on GOP petition drives to get him on the ballot in several states, Nader retorted that Dean was being "very inaccurate in addition to being very unfair." Really?

In West Virginia, JSM Inc., a controversial Florida firm that Nader's campaign hired to collect signatures to place him on the ballot in several states, canvassed a Republican rally for President Bush, telling attendees that Nader's candidacy would help Bush's reelection effort. (JSM, which has ties to several Republican political consultants and GOP donors, had previously gotten in trouble for illegally using a convicted felon to collect signatures for Nader in Arizona, and two of its employees were arrested in Florida for forging signatures on petitions during an unrelated ballot drive.) And, in Michigan, where the state GOP had collected 43,000 signatures to place Nader on the ballot, his campaign initially said it would not accept the Republicans' aid. Days later, however, Nader—who had garnered just 5,400 signatures himself—reversed course and allowed the GOP signatures to be submitted on his behalf. Nader told the *Detroit Free Press*, "You never turn your back on tens of thousands of volunteers who've worked their hearts and minds out for you and feed the cynicism." Ah yes, and those Republicans signing petitions to put him on the ballot were acting with the purest intentions.

LEAVE NO TAX CUT BEHIND

LAST SUMMER, WHEN WE LEFT THE battle in Congress over the administration's beefed-up child tax credit, Democrats were insisting that the additional credit be extended to families making between $10,500 and $26,625 per year, a group the administration's original bill had excluded. House Republicans responded, with their usual force of logic, that people who don't pay taxes don't deserve a tax cut—but that they would make an exception if Democrats agreed to include families making up to $200,000 per year. (The original cutoff for the proposed credit was $110,000.) Democrats and moderate Republican senators balked, and the two competing bills languished in conference committee for the next year.



Ralph Nader

This past week, however, Republicans finally had a breakthrough in their efforts to award rich people their fair share. According to *The Washington Post*, House Republicans are now pushing to raise the cutoff for the child tax credit to $309,000 by attaching it to a bill that would extend a collection of working- and middle-class tax cuts slated to expire this year. (No word yet on how much this latest effort would cost, but last summer's more modest plan weighed in at $82 billion over ten years, only $3.5 billion of which went to low-income families.) Aides to even some conservatives, such as Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles E. Grassley, accuse the House leadership of "overreach[ing]" in its effort to get this upper-income child credit enacted. But, because Democrats generally favor middle-class tax cuts and because they don't want to be seen as blocking them on the eve of their convention in Boston, there's little they can do to stop the bill. Certainly that was the view of certain administration officials, who expressed confidence to the *Post* that the tax credit for wealthy families wouldn't provoke Democrats to scuttle the bill.

AS THE NEW REPUBLIC went to press, it looked as though Senate moderates might nix the idea once again. But the episode is telling nonetheless. If we understand the Republican position correctly, it goes something like this: Extending child tax credits to the working poor: bad. Extending child tax credits to affluent families at a time when Democrats can't object because they'll look obstructionist: good. Maybe this election will be about values after all.

A WING AND A PRAYER

CREDIT THE POWER OF LOVE, OR perhaps Medicare's new policy on obesity, but somehow the bloated Air Force deal to acquire 100 Boeing 767 aerial-refueling tankers has been kept alive. It's a small miracle, given the years of cruel efforts by enemies like Senator John McCain to undermine it. First, foes of the Boeing plan unkindly pointed out that the cost of leasing the planes, $23.5 billion, would be higher than the cost of purchasing them. Then ethics spoilsports made an issue of Darleen A. Druyun, a former Air Force official who had nego-

DAVID COWLES

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tiated the deal even as she was arranging—successfully—to get herself hired at Boeing. A couple of months ago, it looked like the deal was finally close to dead, a creature so laden with scandal and pork it could barely move.

Fortunately, House Speaker Dennis Hastert could see the soul within. In a use of clout that left even allies a bit sheepish in their admiration, Hastert tenderly nursed the patient back to health. "I don't know how we could have done something this controversial without the speaker's support," one Republican representative candidly told the *Post*. Yes, but enough dared to dream. And so the beast is going to get a new jolt of life: $100 million in seed money and a chance to promenade once again on the appropriations catwalk. (Hastert inserted the money into a large defense appropriations bill.) It's not porky, say admirers, just big-boned.

DEPARTMENT OF DOUBLESPEAK

"THE REPORT COVERS EIGHT YEARS of the Clinton administration and eight months of the Bush administration. ... I'm troubled to hear that one of the members of the Clinton administration, Sandy Berger, pilfered documents from the [National] Archives. ... I hope that action doesn't cloud this 9/11 Commission." —Republican House Speaker Dennis Hastert, at news conference following a July 20 congressional briefing on the 9/11 Commission report

"Well, you know, one of the things I've said all along is I would hope this wouldn't become a political football." —Hastert, in the same news conference

MORE IMPORTANT THAN IN 1861?

WHY LINCOLN MATTERS: TODAY MORE THAN EVER —the title of former New York Governor Mario Cuomo's new book on Abraham Lincoln's legacy in U.S. politics. ■

TNR.commentary

Campaign Journal

RYAN LIZZA

FORGET THE UNDECIDEDS: Tony Fabrizio of the Republican polling firm Fabrizio McLaughlin & Associates has released a polling memo with in-depth analysis of undecided voters in 19 battleground states. The memo on this poll is eye-opening. Politics 101 teaches us that undecided voters almost always break for the challenger as the election approaches. If these voters haven't decided to support the guy they know best, the theory goes, there must be a reason they are holding out and will therefore end up supporting the challenger if he or she is an acceptable alternative.

Confirming this theory, Fabrizio found that undecided voters in 2004 are overwhelmingly anti-Bush and pro-Kerry. By almost every criterion they look like Kerry voters, according to the memo:

> They are more than twice as likely to see things headed down the wrong track as compared to voters overall. ... They give President Bush a net NEGATIVE image rating. ... They give President Bush a net NEGATIVE job approval rating. ... A solid majority sees the Country as being WORSE OFF than they were 4 years ago. ... They are significantly more pessimistic about the current state of the nation's economy. ... They are significantly more pessimistic about their own current financial condition. ... They are twice as likely to see the number of jobs in their area as DECREASING instead of increasing. ... They are significantly more likely to favor the federal government doing more as opposed to doing less. ... They are more likely to be pro-choice on the issue of abortion. ... They are more likely to have seen or heard advertising critical of President Bush than John Kerry in the past year. ... John Kerry holds a slight net POSITIVE image rating [among the undecided voters].

As the memo notes, "Clearly, if these undecided voters were leaning any harder against the door of the Kerry camp, they would crash right through it."

&c.

NOAM SCHEIBER

RUNNING THE BASES: Mike Allen and Dana Milbank have a nice piece in the July 15 *Washington Post* about George W. Bush's efforts to woo conservatives. But I think they overlook an important part of the story. According to Allen and Milbank, Bush is pursuing an excite-the-base strategy in lieu of a tack-to-the-center strategy because his political advisers have concluded that, in a highly partisan atmosphere, there are more votes to be won among conservatives than among moderates. The two write:

> Although age-old campaign rules dictate that the general-election candidate must emphasize moderate "swing" voters and political independents, Bush strategists are predicting that this election, more than previous ones, will be determined by the turnout of each side's partisans. ...
>
> "In close elections in today's environment, the old political strategy of focusing just on independents won't work," said Matthew Dowd, the Bush campaign's chief strategist. ...
>
> Democrats say Bush's approach is novel. "It's a new way to run for president," said James Carville, the strategist behind Bill Clinton's 1992 victory. Whereas "usually you quietly shore up your base and aggressively court the swing voter, Bush is aggressively shoring up his base and quietly courting the swing voter."

This explanation strikes me as a little convenient for the Bushies. While you obviously never want to ignore your base, the reason the Bushies are focusing so hard on theirs isn't that they've carefully appraised the political landscape and concluded that this is their best strategy. They don't have a choice: Despite Karl Rove's best efforts, the Republican base still isn't shored up.

Rove's grand plan was to spend the first three years of Bush's term stroking conservatives' erogenous zones—lots of tax cuts, conservative judges, regulatory rollbacks, and religiously hued social policy (the administration's marriage initiative, its efforts to restrict access to abortion, its position on stem-cell research, et cetera). The idea behind this was that it would give Bush the political capital to tack leftward during his reelection campaign. But a funny thing happened on the way to the center: Rove discovered that conservatives weren't yet sated. They needed more. Conservatives went ballistic over last year's Medicare prescription-drug bill, over additional money for the reconstruction of Iraq, over the deficit, and over the administration's perceived indifference to gay marriage. Equally maddening to conservatives were proposals like a manned mission to Mars and immigration reform. So, rather than spend this year reaching out to moderates, as planned, Rove found himself in full retreat, junking Mars and illegal immigrants, and embracing a constitutional ban on gay marriage.

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Bush loses his base.

White Flight

BY JOHN B. JUDIS AND RUY TEIXEIRA

MARTINSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA

SWEAT STREAMS DOWN Terry's face as he pushes a lawnmower up the street toward his home in Martinsburg, a small town in West Virginia's eastern panhandle. Middle-aged, balding, and paunchy, Terry used to work in a local factory but is now on disability because of an accident. Asked his opinion of President George W. Bush and the Iraq war, he says he used to like Bush and, at first, he thought it was a "good idea" to invade Iraq. But he has now changed his mind. "They shouldn't have gone over there," he says. "They are killing a whole lot of innocent people. It isn't worth it. They already caught the guy. They should have gotten the troops out then."

Christine, who works for a government agency, is sitting in her front yard, overseeing a garage sale. Like others on her block, she has a PRIDE IN THE UNITED STATES flag prominently displayed. But her support for the troops in Iraq doesn't extend to the war itself. "I don't think it's been worth it," she says. "I don't know why we blow someplace up and then spend so much to rebuild it when we have our own issues over here. I did support it when we went over. But now I don't think we had any reason to go over there." She says she hasn't decided who to vote for but is leaning toward John Kerry.

Terry and Christine are members of the white working class—comprising people, ranging from clerks to factory workers to technicians, without four-year college degrees. Since 1968, Republican presidential candidates have relied heavily on these voters to win elections. In 2004, Bush will need to win them decisively to carry battleground states like West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, or Missouri. But he may not, thanks in large measure to growing dissatisfaction with the Iraq war. Perhaps no other group's views have changed so dramatically since the U.S. invasion, and perhaps no other group's mounting opposition to the war is as ominous for Bush's reelection hopes.

ALIENATED BY THE civil rights movement, and later by antiwar protesters and feminists, white, working-class voters began transferring their loyalty from New Deal Democrats to conservative Republicans in the 1960s. They gave large majorities to Richard Nixon in 1972, Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984, and George H.W. Bush in 1988—more than making up for rising Democratic support among professionals and minorities. Bill Clinton, with his mix of economic populism, New Democrat social philosophy, and folksiness, narrowly carried these voters in 1992 and 1996, but Al Gore lost them by 17 percent in 2000. That's a big reason Gore failed to carry Ohio, Missouri, Louisiana, Arkansas, and West Virginia—all states Clinton had won. The shift to the GOP was even more dramatic among what one might call the working-class elite—skilled, white workers who had some specialized training after high school. Gore lost these voters by 20 percent in 2000, and Democratic congressional candidates lost them by a whopping 24 percent in 2002.

White, working-class voters make up the bulk of voters in many battleground states. In West Virginia, for example, they comprise 74 percent of the electorate; in Missouri, 64 percent; in Ohio and Pennsylvania, just over 60 percent. If Bush wins white, working-class voters in the battleground states by more than ten points, he should carry most of them. But, if his advantage falls below this margin, he will be in trouble. And that's what seems to be happening.

In late May and early June, Gallup polls showed white, working-class voters, who had favored Bush over Gore by 17 percent in 2000, favoring him over Kerry by an average of only 50 to 42 percent. Moreover, Bush led among workers with some college by only 49 to 44 percent—a difference of 15 points from the 2000 election. Since these are national figures and since white workers in battleground states are substantially more Democratic than white workers elsewhere, one has to assume Bush's margins are even smaller—and perhaps nonexistent—in West Virginia and other Midwestern battlegrounds.

There are many reasons for this shift, but one stands out: a change in white, working-class perceptions of the Iraq war. These voters usually favor Democrats on economics, health care, and Social Security but strongly favor Republicans on national security and cultural issues. As they have grown disillusioned with the war in Iraq, however, they have lost their confidence in Bush and the GOP.

In June 2003, according to Gallup, 65 percent of white, working-class voters thought it was "worth going to war" in Iraq, while only 33 percent disagreed. By late May 2004, only 52 percent thought the war was worth fighting, and 46 percent thought it was not. The change among workers with some college was even more dramatic. They went from 70 to 30 percent in favor of the war to only 52 to 46 percent, a 34-point swing.

Other groups, including senior citizens, minorities, young voters, and voters with postgraduate education, have also become disillusioned with the war, but they were not as supportive to begin with. White, working-class voters were the bastion of pro-war sentiment. And, unlike minority voters or postgrads, they were also thoroughly supportive of Bush's presidency. So, while the war probably hasn't reduced Bush's already slim support among minority voters,

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John B. Judis and Ruy Teixeira are co-authors of THE EMERGING DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY.

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it is undermining his support among the white working class, perhaps his most crucial voting bloc.

In 1968, some white, working-class voters deserted Democratic presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey over their opposition to the Vietnam War. But their reasons for opposing the war were different from those of the antiwar protesters. They didn't object to the war's immorality, but to its futility, the waste of lives and resources on a battle that could not be won, at least not in the manner in which it was being fought.

The same distinction prevails today. Many voters in Martinsburg don't object to the invasion but to the occupation. Like Terry, they think the military should have gone in, captured Saddam Hussein, then left. They don't like the idea of sending troops and funds to rebuild Iraq. Don, a construction worker wearing a Chicago Bears cap, says, "I don't think it is helping us at all. We are sending all our resources and money out there."

But, as these West Virginians have learned that the Iraqis didn't possess weapons of mass destruction and were not allied with Al Qaeda, they have also begun to wonder whether the war was necessary at all. That has created a special kind of resentment in a state that has the third-highest percentage of National Guard troops mobilized for the war and where almost everyone knows someone serving in Iraq. Asked about Bush and the war, Shirley, a housewife holding a garage sale in front of the Moose Lodge, responds, "I have just one thing to say: Bring my son home."

Still, Bush is not getting routed in Martinsburg. In a Saturday walk around the town's blue-collar neighborhoods, about one-third of those interviewed expressed support for the president and the war. Their support seemed to hinge on the belief that, by invading Iraq, the military was also fighting Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. Richard, a landscaper, says, "They are all tied to the same string. That's why the Iraqis are fighting us."

One person was critical of the war but still supportive of Bush. "I think we have another Vietnam getting started," says Jim, who runs a lawnmower repair business out of his yard. "We should have done it and gotten out of there." But he still prefers Bush to Kerry. "At least I know where George stands," he says. "You listen to Kerry, and you don't know which side of the fence he stands on."

For the most part, however, people in Martinsburg seem to reflect the national polls, which show a close correlation between support or opposition to the war and support or opposition to Bush's presidency. Says Brenda, who, as a hair stylist at J.C. Penney, hears political arguments all day and who opposes the war herself, "Nobody is in the middle on this issue." This division among white, working-class voters is bad news for Bush. With the rest of the nation closely divided, Bush needs to win big with this demographic. If support for the war among the white working class continues to erode, so will Bush's chances of reelection. ■

The Confederacy's new face.

Lost Cause

BY JASON ZENGERLE

FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA

On a Saturday afternoon not long ago, Walt Hilderman was standing in a soggy horse pasture here—a .75-caliber musket in one hand, a Confederate flag in the other. He was participating in a reenactment of an 1865 Civil War battle called the Skirmish at Gamble's Hotel. A retired police captain with bowed legs and a drooping silver moustache, Hilderman wore the rebel-gray uniform well. In fact, if you forgot he had been swigging from a bottle of Coke shortly before the battle, it wasn't hard to picture Hilderman fighting some 140 years earlier. As he and his fellow Confederate reenactors repulsed a Union charge—just as the real Confederate forces had done in Florence in 1865—Hilderman fired his gun, waved his flag, and let out the occasional rebel yell. After the Union reenactors surrendered, Hilderman fell in with the other men of his North Carolina infantry regiment and marched to the company's camp. "Who are we? Tarheels!" they shouted as they went. "What do we do? Kill Yankees!"

Hilderman, who grew up in Charlotte, North Carolina, was raised on tales of his great-great-grandfather's service in the Confederate Army. "Ever since I was a young boy, I've identified with the Confederate soldier," he says. In 1963, when Hilderman was only 14, he participated in his first Civil War reenactment. Now, in his fifties and recovering from cancer, Hilderman still manages to kill Yankees at reenactments eight weekends per year.

But, in the real world, Hilderman spends most of his time these days battling his fellow Confederates. A member of the nation's leading Confederate heritage group, the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV), Hilderman is running to be the organization's commander-in-chief on the platform that the SCV's current leadership is rife with racists and right-wing extremists. As Hilderman sees it, the SCV is supposed to honor and preserve the memory of the Confederate soldier through activities like reenactments and cleaning Confederate gravestones. But lately, Hilderman says, the leadership of the 31,000-member organization has taken the SCV in a more political direction, aligning it with extremist groups like the neo-secessionist League of the South and the white supremacist Council of Conservative Citizens (CofCC). Now, according to Hilderman, local SCV camp meetings are more likely to feature anti-government diatribes and odes to the unique "Anglo-Celtic" nature of the South than plans to commemorate Robert E. Lee Day. "We start carrying a lot of extra

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baggage that the promotion of the Confederate soldier's image doesn't need," Hilderman says. "It doesn't make a difference to my great-great-grandfather, who was wounded on Kennesaw Mountain in 1864, what the immigration practices of the United States are in 2004."

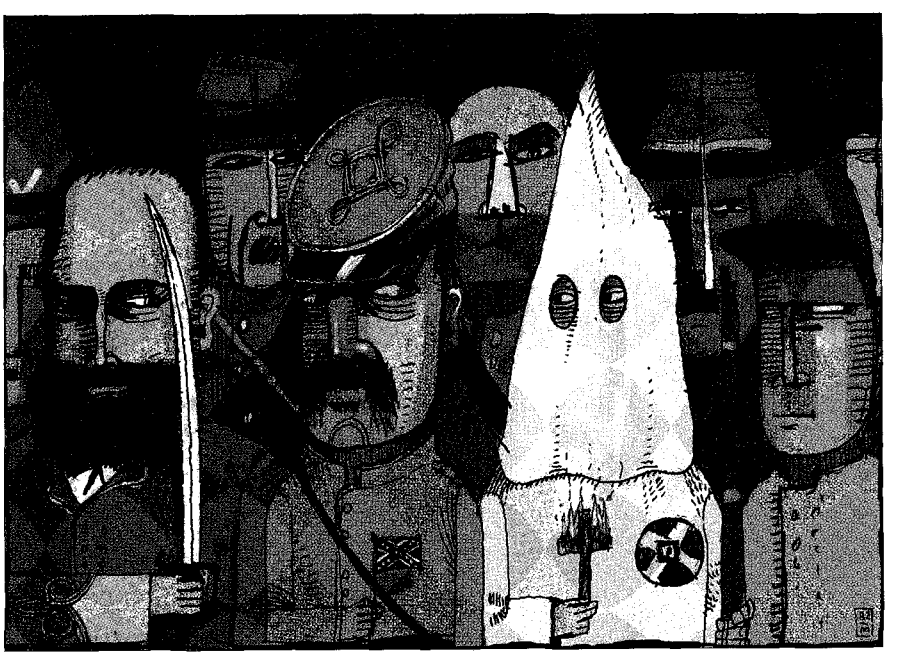
Two years ago, Hilderman and a dozen other SCV members formed a group called Save the SCV, dedicated to ending the organization's radical drift. Now, as one of three candidates running to be SCV commander-in-chief—the election will be held at the SCV's annual convention in Georgia from July 28 through July 31—Hilderman is hoping to wrest the organization from the forces he believes are destroying it. "The Sons of Confederate Veterans is our last, best chance to defend and promote Confederate heritage," says Hilderman, who is frustrated that the Civil War is often portrayed as a conflict between the freedom-loving North and the slave-loving South. "And, if the SCV goes over to ... the extremists, then we'll lose the last firewall against people who want to destroy Confederate heritage."

But preserving that firewall is an uphill battle. Hilderman's anti-racism campaign has generated little enthusiasm inside the SCV. Currently, the only publicly identified member of Save the SCV is Hilderman: The men who founded the group with him have since left the SCV—having evidently concluded it was beyond saving—and those SCV members who support Hilderman's cause, he explains, are afraid to say so publicly for fear of retribution. Indeed, ever since founding Save the SCV, Hilderman has been routinely denounced as a traitor and a scalawag; on SCV-affiliated websites, he is portrayed wearing a Union uniform. "May God forgive your ancestors for having such vile and ignorant offspring," one outraged SCV member e-mailed Hilderman.

Yet, Hilderman is hardly the first person to accuse the SCV of racism. For years, liberal groups and some in the media have charged the SCV with bigotry, primarily on the assumption that anyone celebrating the Confederacy is condoning slavery. And the SCV—ardent proponents of the "Lost Cause" view of the Civil War, which holds, in part, that the South fought to defend states' rights, not the institution of slavery—has always rejected these charges, claiming that outsiders have misunderstood the organization. But now, even though the racism accusation is coming from inside the SCV, its rank-and-file members are refusing to pay it much heed. In other words, now that the SCV is in danger of actually becoming what its external critics have long—and often unfairly—accused it of being, the people who recognize that danger, people like Hilderman, appear powerless to stop it.

THE SONS OF Confederate Veterans was founded in Richmond in 1896, at a time not only of renewed white supremacy in the South, as blacks lost the rights they had enjoyed during Reconstruction, but also of a new spirit of reconciliation with the North. "The unseemly things, which occurred in the great conflict between the states, should be forgotten, or at least forgiven, and no longer permitted to disturb complete harmony between North and South," the former Confederate general John B. Gordon—who led the SCV's forbearer, the United Confederate Veterans—urged his fellow Southerners. And the SCV—which, in its constitution, pledged to be a "strictly patriotic, historical, educational, benevolent, non-political, non-racial, and non-sectarian" organization—came to serve as a prominent symbol of that harmony. "The former Confederates and their children agreed that it was providential that slavery was abolished and the Union was preserved," explains University of North Carolina sociologist John Shelton Reed. "And, in exchange for that, they were allowed to honor their heroes and fly their flags."

That agreement remained in effect for half a century—until the civil rights movement, when Southern blacks, who understandably didn't look kindly on Confederate heroes and flags, gained a political voice. But, even after Confederate symbols again became politically controversial—serving as symbols of hatred, in the eyes of many blacks, or of defiance, in the eyes of some whites—the SCV generally steered clear of politics. "The SCV was for history buffs and genealogy fans," says Reed, who has lectured to a number of SCV chapters over the years. "It really wasn't particularly political—at least no more so than your average country club." Indeed, to the extent the SCV did involve itself in politics, it was usually to distance itself from Confederate symbols' negative associations: In 1992, the SCV passed a



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resolution condemning the Ku Klux Klan and "all others who promote hate."

But the SCV's apolitical nature began to change in the late '90s, when the NAACP and other groups launched campaigns to remove the Confederate flag from state capitols in Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina. In response, some SCV members—calling themselves "the reform wing"—pushed for their organization to defend Confederate symbols aggressively; and in 2000, the SCV waded into the political debate over the flag, lining up alongside a host of extremist groups, such as the League of the South and the CofCC, to join a rally in defense of the flag at the South Carolina State Capitol. More often than not, those in the SCV's so-called reform wing were sympathetic to the League's and the CofCC's far-right positions across the board, and soon, the SCV's campaign to keep the Confederate flag flying morphed into a more general anti-government, anti-Northern crusade.

Since the SCV's inception, camp meetings had begun with a Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag, but now some camps abolished the Pledge and removed the Stars and Stripes from meetings altogether. "What they were doing was, they were moving from a position of regional pride in the Confederacy and the fight of the Confederate soldiers to a position that was anti-American," says Larry Walker, who quit his SCV camp in Charlotte in 2001, when it stopped flying the American flag at meetings.

The reform wing's push came to a head in 2002, when a leading reform member of the SCV, Kirk Lyons, ran for commander of the largest of the SCV's three geographic divisions, the Army of Northern Virginia. Lyons, a North Carolina lawyer who runs what he calls a "Civil Rights Law Firm for Confederate Southern Americans," is the brains behind the dubious legal theory that "Confederate Americans" are a distinct "national origin" deserving of constitutional protection. In addition to a string of unsuccessful lawsuits against companies and school districts that ban Confederate symbols in office cubicles or on T-shirts, Lyons has a long history of associations with extremist groups: He has represented members of the Ku Klux Klan, and, in 1990, he married the daughter of a leader of the Aryan Nations. These associations prompted another North Carolina SCV member, Charles Hawks, to run against Lyons. As Hawks told his fellow SCV members, Lyons's "alleged ties, whether real or perceived, to certain infamous organizations could be devastating to the SCV."

When Hawks narrowly defeated Lyons at the group's national convention in August 2002, it seemed the SCV had avoided calamity. "We withstood the fire," Hawks declared after his victory. "We'll be stronger. We'll move on." But, shortly after Hawks's triumph, a South Carolina SCV member named Ron Wilson was elected SCV commander-in-chief by a margin of 47 votes. And, while Wilson wasn't as strident as Lyons, his views about the SCV's future direction—and politics in general—were nearly identical to Lyons's. Under his leadership, Wilson vowed, the SCV would "teach the truth and culture of Confederate heritage" and help correct a "drifting, wobbly American society" that has been sullied by "the homosexual agenda, abortion, and other Godless causes."

After taking power, Wilson swiftly appointed to key national staff positions a number of SCV members who, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, also belonged to the League of the South and the CofCC. And the SCV became even more combative, taking its campaign to preserve Confederate heritage to courtrooms and statehouses. "How do you protect the Confederate soldier's good name?" asks Lyons, who, while deprived of a major SCV office, remains a close ally of Wilson. "Polishing headstones and giving education seminars and going to reenactments doesn't cut it anymore. ... We're at war."

Those who resisted this call to war were dealt with accordingly. A few months after his election, Wilson stripped Hawks of his position as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. And, over the course of the next two years, other moderates were systematically purged. About 350 members from North Carolina alone were suspended for publicly supporting Save the SCV. Many of them chose not to fight their suspensions and simply walked away. "I'm not going to struggle to be a member of a group where guys don't want you," says Gilbert Jones, an SCV member from Greensboro, who quit not long after he was suspended in November 2002. "They've gotten confused: Whereas the Confederate battle flag used to be the symbol of the cause, it's now *the* cause." He adds: "It was a great organization. But it's gone down the crapper."

WALT HILDERMAN, ALONG with the rest of his camp in Matthews, North Carolina, was suspended from the SCV in January 2003. But, because of a quirk in SCV bylaws, even suspended members are eligible to run for office. So, after being suspended, Hilderman not only refused to quit the organization, he launched a campaign to become its commander-in-chief.

Hilderman insists that the vast majority of SCV members are just like him—historically minded men who want only to honor their Confederate ancestors and who have no interest in extremist politics. But he acknowledges that, after years of being called bigots by external critics, many in the SCV are now simply deaf to any charges of racism—no matter who is making them. That the SCV's current leadership has managed to cast the battle over Confederate symbols as part of a larger culture war—with Lyons proclaiming that he wants to stop "the ethnic cleansing of Dixie"—makes Hilderman's task that much harder. "I'm a middle-aged white guy, a policeman, and a conservative, and I understand where guys like me are coming from in terms of getting their culture changed," Hilderman says. "We see things we hold dear—religion, the sanctity of marriage, patriotism—being dragged through the mud. And the siege mentality that grips a lot of guys has been played on

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by the leadership of the SCV."

But Hilderman remains undeterred. Next week, he'll go to the SCV's national convention in Dalton, Georgia, to stand for election knowing that he faces almost certain defeat—and possibly worse. "I've got some security concerns," he admits, "like getting spit on, getting hit in the face, or being run over in the parking lot in an unfortunate accident. ... I just bring a bull's-eye with me."

And what will Hilderman do after he loses in Dalton? Sitting in his tent at the reenactment in Florence, he pauses a moment and fiddles with the buttons on his rebel-gray uniform before answering. "My basic fear," Hilderman eventually says, "is that, if the SCV keeps going the way it's going, in fifty years, my great-great-grandfather and the hundreds of thousands of Southerners who fought in the Civil War will be regarded as nothing but racist, totalitarian Nazis. That's why I'm going to keep doing everything in my power to change the SCV—so that doesn't happen." Like a true Confederate, it seems, Hilderman doesn't mind fighting for a lost cause. ■

Treating protesters like terrorists.

Force Multiplier

BY GWEN SHAFFER

LAST YEAR, NIKKI HARTMAN traveled to Miami to march alongside roughly 10,000 others protesting the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). It was about 4 p.m. on November 20 when she and her friend, Robert Davis, plopped down on a patch of grass downtown to watch a circle of dancers and musicians perform. Exhausted and sunburned, Hartman clenched prayer beads and began to meditate. Throngs of other protesters—mothers toting kids, teenagers, retired union workers—milled nearby, less than ten feet from a thick line of Miami police dressed in riot gear. Suddenly, the cops began banging their shields and charging forward. Apparently, a few protesters had set trash on fire and the police wanted to clear the area. Hartman, a 28-year-old artist from Tampa, and Davis fled. She doesn't remember hearing the police bark orders to disperse. But she does recall hearing popping sounds as officers fired tear gas and rubber bullets, seven of which slammed painfully into Davis's body. Hartman felt a sting and realized the side of her head was bleeding. The gash required a trip to the hospital and five staples to close.

Hartman is one of dozens of protesters seriously injured in clashes with Miami police during the FTAA meeting. The barrage of rubber bullets and pepper spray that rained down on her are only two of the "less lethal" weapons—many developed for military use—that local police now routinely deploy during political demonstrations. Tasers, concussion grenades, beanbag launchers, pepper balls, flashbangs, and even medieval-sounding flying truncheons are standard accoutrements of law enforcement at these events. Miami Mayor Manuel Díaz calls these tactics "a model for homeland defense." And, unfortunately, he's probably right.

THE HARD-LINE APPROACH to protests began after the 1999 World Trade Organization meeting, where rioting activists blindsided Seattle police and caused $3 million in property damage. But it was September 11, 2001, that blurred the line between squashing demonstrations and fighting terrorism. Indeed, a militarized police response like that at the FTAA protest would not have been possible without federal homeland security funding. Miami Police Chief John Timoney orchestrated the elaborate Miami offensive thanks to $10 million in special funding, including $8.5 million that Congress lumped into an Iraq appropriations bill. Following the clashes with the FTAA protesters, Miami Police Sergeant Robert Baker acknowledged that the department "brought in a lot of this ammo for the FTAA. ... We don't normally keep a lot of it on hand." Timoney rolled out armored personnel

Miami police spent millions on military-style weapons to contain FTAA protesters.

MARK ABRAHAM/EPA/LANDOV

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carriers and water cannons. He purchased concussion grenades, beanbag projectiles, tear gas, Tasers, and rubber bullets. The Miami police SWAT team had "a variety of less lethal munitions and weapons, numerous tools and ropes," according to an "after-action review" released by the Miami Police Department in February. Dr. Eduardo Diaz, executive director for the Miami-Dade County Police Independent Review Panel, notes, "Prior to 9/11, I'd never seen the federal government spend this kind of money to prepare local police departments for a demonstration."

And now, Washington is cutting two checks, for $25 million each, to help pay for security in Boston and New York City during the party conventions. Cities all over the country have received smaller pots of money from the feds as well. Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge recently boasted that his department has allocated a record $8 billion to local and state governments for training and equipment. Political activists fear local police departments will spend the federal money on less lethal weapons, only to deploy them during peaceful demonstrations. Under the guise of homeland security, cops are free to treat anyone on the street as a potential combatant, says Eric Laursen, an organizer with the New York–based Campaign to Demilitarize the Police. "The homeland security budget blurs the line between fighting terrorism and suppressing dissent. You have to ask yourself, Is this really about keeping people safe, or not wanting people to protest?"

Demonstrators in Northern California are asking the same question. On April 7, 2003, the Oakland Police Department broke up an antiwar picket in front of that city's port. The police fired an array of less lethal weapons, including 37-millimeter shells filled with wood and rubber, tear gas, and "stinger" grenades that exploded in disorienting blasts of light and sound as well as rubber pellets. According to a class-action civil suit pending against the city, the 500 protesters had begun walking away from the dock when police broke out their high-tech weaponry. A lawsuit filed against Oakland police contends that at least 50 people were injured. A projectile hit one demonstrator in the back of her calf, causing a massive blood clot that required surgery. She also underwent a skin graft.

Not coincidentally, five days earlier, the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (CATIC) had sent Oakland police a vaguely worded bulletin implying that trouble could erupt during the antiwar demonstration. CATIC operates on $6.7 million from the state of California and is staffed with personnel from the FBI, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and other local, state, and federal agencies. CATIC warned that activists were conspiring with the longshoremen's union to shut down the nation's fourth-largest shipping port and that they could be armed with Molotov cocktails. "The memo raised red flags about terrorism, and the Oakland police took it very seriously," says the plaintiffs' attorney, Rachel Lederman.

CATIC spokesman Mike Van Winkle told reporters that the agency didn't need direct evidence of terrorist activity to justify the memo. "You can make an easy kind of link that, if you have a protest group protesting a war where the cause that's being fought against is international terrorism, you might have terrorism at that [event]," Van Winkle said. "You can almost argue that a protest against that is a terrorist act." The state rewarded the Oakland Police Department for crushing the protest. In July 2003, the California Office of Homeland Security paid local police $424,243 "for reimbursement of overtime costs incurred ... *during the hostilities with Iraq*." (Emphasis added.)

Compare this incident with the response that greeted massive antiwar protests in San Francisco, just across the bay from Oakland, on the eve of the 1991 Gulf war. Thousands of people surrounded the city's federal building, some of them launching fireworks and rushing police barricades; a police patrol car was set ablaze, hundreds of protesters stormed onto the Bay Bridge (forcing its temporary closure), rocks and burning debris were hurled at the police, and windows were smashed at several downtown businesses. Yet, while hundreds were arrested, there were no reports of any protesters being seriously injured. By all accounts, the police acted with remarkable restraint. Asked later why he didn't use more force against demonstrators, Police Chief Willis Casey told *The San Francisco Chronicle*, "This is not Lithuania." Few police departments seem willing to show such moderation today. "It used to be that avoidance of large clashes was evidence that police had successfully policed the protest, but that no longer is a criterion for them," says John Noakes, a visiting sociology professor at the University of Pennsylvania who studies protest movements. Instead, Noakes says, police are more interested in clearing the streets—something less lethal weapons make it easier to do.

THE MILITARY ORIGINALLY developed less lethal weapons to quell rebellions and fight wars. But local police departments are now the main market for such equipment. Today, at least 4,400 local law enforcement agencies use Tasers, according to the manufacturer. And ShockRounds—specialized bullets that generate a high-voltage charge—are marketed as highly effective for controlling both crowds and terrorism. Armor Holdings, Inc. characterizes its "family" of chemical munitions as "the first line of solutions for the management of crowds."

Political correctness, if nothing else, precludes the police from bashing skulls or siccing attack dogs on demonstrators as they notoriously did during the civil rights and anti-Vietnam struggles. And that's the beauty of less lethal weapons. They rarely kill or leave puddles of blood in the street. They do incapacitate people for an hour or two—just long enough to prevent them from continuing to protest. "There's a perception that less lethal weapons are a good thing because no one wants to see cops using billy clubs," Noakes says. "But this new technology is frightening because now the police don't have to exercise restraint."

Even law enforcement advocates acknowledge that less lethal weapons have altered "the force continuum" police

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use. Before their introduction, officers gave suspects a verbal command to stop, followed by an order to lie down. If suspects failed to comply, an officer brandished his baton. As a last resort, he fired a gun. "Now the continuum is much more complex," says John Firman, research director for the International Association of Chiefs of Police. "Pepper spray has eliminated the baton. And a verbal command is often immediately followed by use of a Taser or pepper spray."

Force wasn't used against protesters during the Group of Eight Summit held in June on Sea Island, Georgia, but officials were certainly prepared. More than 50 law enforcement agencies converged on the isolated resort town. The vast military presence included surface-to-air missiles in salt marshes, public parks, and upscale properties on Sea Island and nearby Jekyll Island. Uniformed soldiers patrolled the streets. Protesters were cautioned not to expect warm Southern hospitality. Before a single banner was unfurled, Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue declared a state of emergency. Under the designation, any assembly could be deemed unlawful and Perdue could proclaim martial law. To pay for the agents and equipment, Georgia received $25 million as part of the $87 billion Congress allocated for Iraq. The Pentagon chipped in another $10 million for the National Guard troops.

In the end, security forces outnumbered protesters 67 to one. The last time Savannah swarmed with 20,000 armed men, General William T. Sherman's Union troops controlled the coastal town. Government officials claimed these actions were necessary to fight terrorism, but they were aimed at demonstrators, too. "Some of these people will come not just to express their minds but to burn buildings, disrupt traffic, and cause harm. We need to be prepared," Thomas Bevan, director of the Center for Emergency Response Technology, Instruction & Policy in Atlanta, testified before state senators in January.

The United States doesn't sponsor a national police force, but local departments constantly share information and dispatch officers to other cities on reconnaissance missions. Boston and New York have sent officers to observe demonstrations in Portland, Oregon; Washington; Miami; and Sea Island. Last year, Timoney dropped by Boston to share his experience directing security during the 2000 Republican National Convention in Philadelphia, where he was police chief at the time. New technologies make communication even easier. In February, the feds rolled out the Homeland Security Information Network. The system allows local, state, and federal officials to collect and immediately share sensitive but unclassified information—including information about potential protests. Ridge hopes to have 100 law enforcement agencies linked through the system by mid-summer.

Paul Browne, the New York Police Department's deputy commissioner for public information, says political dissenters are "taking themselves too seriously" if they believe the government is spending millions of dollars on equipment and training simply to silence their voices. "Our concern is not the protesters themselves; it's that any large demonstration is a target for a terrorist attack." But is this concern serious enough to justify quashing protests? "The subtext is that protesters provide cover for terrorist attacks. But there's no historical evidence of this," says Chip Berlet, a political analyst who studies right-wing movements. In other words, the fear of terrorism may explain the need for less lethal weapons. It just doesn't justify their use against protesters. ■

How Shrum took over the party.

The Boss

BY FRANKLIN FOER

ROBERT SHRUM, John Kerry's chief strategist and speechwriter, is considered the poet laureate of populism—the man who injected the phrase "the people versus the powerful" into Democratic vernacular. Over his 35-year career, Shrum has been responsible for many of the memorable lines to leave the mouths of such Democratic eminences as Ted Kennedy, George McGovern, and Al Gore. But one of his most telling speeches won't ever be collected in an anthology of great oratory.

For many years, Shrum plied his trade on behalf of Richard Gephardt. And in 1997, he began priming his client for a presidential run. Shrum wanted to signal Gephardt's intentions loudly, so he wrote him a stemwinder, to be delivered at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government—a pugilistic declaration that the Missourian would challenge Gore for the nomination in 2000 and reclaim the party from the rule of centrists. The speech derided New Democrats, "who set their compass only off the direction of others, who talk about the political center but fail to understand that, if it is only defined by others, it lacks core values."

If Gephardt's address hasn't entered the pantheon of momentous Democratic speeches, it made quite a stir at the

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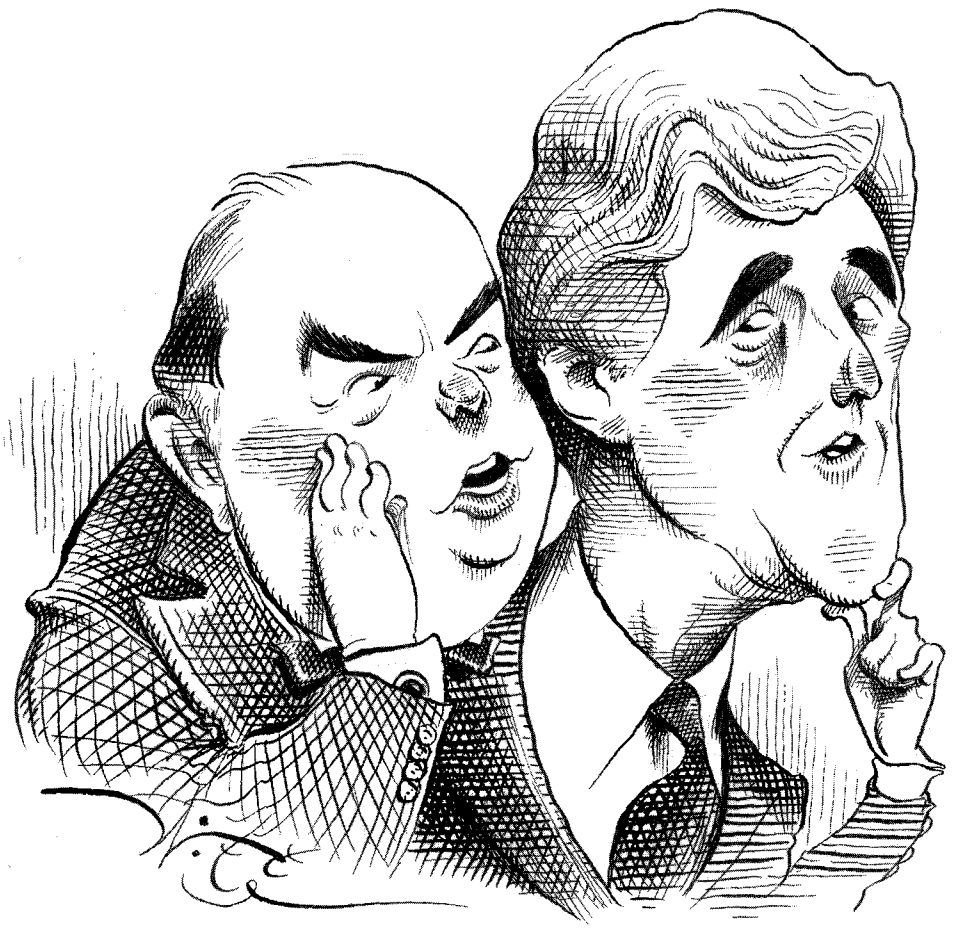
time. The Clinton White House was so livid at Gephardt that officials didn't even bother hiding their ire behind anonymous quotes. "It sounds like politics over principle, especially given [Gephardt's] flip-flops on multiple issues," then–Clinton adviser Rahm Emanuel told *The New York Times*. To discredit the Gephardt-Shrum critique, the White House conceived a clever counterattack. President Clinton summoned Ted Kennedy to deliver a defense of his administration. "The American people don't care about New Democrat or old Democrat. They care about the quality of their lives," the liberal lion intoned at the National Press Club, deflecting the barrage that his fellow populist had delivered only nine days earlier.

But, when the texts of the Gephardt fusillade and the Kennedy rebuttal are set next to one another, a careful reader may notice certain similarities—similar sentence structures, similar rhetorical patterns. As it turns out, the echoes aren't coincidental. The speeches shared an author: Bob Shrum.

Political strategists who play at the highest level of presidential politics usually have short shelf lives. If they lose, they retire into relative obscurity—see, for example, Bob Beckel (Walter Mondale, 1984), Susan Estrich (Michael Dukakis, 1988), and Scott Reed (Bob Dole, 1996). If they win, they abandon campaigns to parlay their success into lucrative celebrity—see, for example, James Carville. Shrum is the exception to these laws of mortality. As the Gephardt-Kennedy interchange illustrates, he seems to be everywhere at all times in Democratic Party politics. Yes, he was Gore's chief brain for the 2000 general election. But that failure didn't taint him. In fact, he has reprised the role in the current campaign. This spring, a Kerry adviser told *The Washington Post* that Shrum was "the person who has the most influence on what comes out of John Kerry's mouth on any given day." His campaign colleagues describe him as Kerry's answer to Karl Rove. And even that understates his significance in the party, since he counts 13 of the Senate's 48 Democrats as his clients. Democratic lobbyist Tony Podesta says, "He dominates the field. If he weren't in politics, there might be an antitrust investigation of his monopoly."

At the same time Shrum has amassed this power, he has also acquired another reputation. Democrats talk about the "Shrum Curse," a phrase so widespread that even *The New York Times* has written about it. Shrum has now worked on seven presidential campaigns—and racked up a grand average of .000. But this is an unfairly damning statistic. After all, except for Bill Clinton's strategists, most Democratic operatives over the past several decades have lost. There's a better summation of Shrum's career than "curse." Call it the "Shrum Paradox," whereby a fairly average consultant has achieved extraordinary predominance. Shrum hasn't built his consulting empire on strategic brilliance. His success is the result of qualities that matter far more in contemporary campaigns: superb infighting skills and an ability to sell his own myth—to brand himself as *the* top-drawer political consultant. The problem is that, going into the Democratic convention, strategic brilliance is just what Kerry needs.

THE SHRUM BRAND traces back to a single evening in August 1980. Already a veteran of three losing presidential campaigns at the age of 37 (John Lindsay, Ed Muskie, George McGovern), Shrum had just suffered his fourth consecutive defeat. Ted Kennedy had battled Jimmy Carter almost all the way



MICHAEL WITTE

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to the end of the primaries, and now at the convention Shrum scripted the final speech of the campaign. With nothing left to lose, Shrum swung for the rhetorical fences, producing an elegant précis of 1970s bleeding-heart liberalism, written in a distinctly Kennedyesque cadence with an almost nineteenth-century formality. "Long after the signs come down, and the crowds stop cheering, and the bands stop playing, may it be said of our party in 1980 that we found our faith again," the speech famously concluded. "For all those whose cares have been our concern, the work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives, and the dream shall never die." Kennedy knew there would be a rush to claim authorship of the speech. As a token of his loyalty, he leaked to the press that it was Shrum's pen that had scrawled the text.

It is rare, almost unprecedented, for speechwriters to segue into careers as full-service political consultants—cutting ads, advising on daily message and meta-strategy. But Shrum understood that writing provided him a competitive advantage. He would tap a truth about politicians: They are far vainer about the words spoken on the podium than the ads that appear on their behalf. "They hire Shrum," says one operative, "because they want to sound lyrical. Deep down, they're hoping that they can sound like Teddy, too." Democratic strategist Bill Carrick, who worked with Shrum in Kennedy's Senate office, recalls glimpsing Ernest Hollings on the eve of his 1984 presidential bid. "I need me a Shroom," Hollings barked in his South Carolina twang. "I need a Shroom who can make me sound good in these speeches."

Prospective clients aren't just wooed by Shrum's residual Kennedy mystique; they are wooed by Kennedy himself. Shrum is genuinely tight with his old patron, for whom he served four years as press secretary and even wrote poignant eulogies. "They are almost family," says Democratic fund-raiser Bob Burkett. (Kennedy does a hilarious Shrum imitation.) And Kennedy helps Shrum's business. In his biography of Kennedy, Adam Clymer recounts the senator advising Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski to hire Shrum. As one political consultant told me, "Kennedy calls and says you can do very well with Bob, and he adds a measure of sincerity to Shrum's claims. If a senator or Senate candidate is a star-fucker—and many of them are—Shrum is perfect."

Over the years, Shrum has deepened—and polished—his brand. The typical Democratic consultant has a rather earthy uniform: While he (or she) may have a closet filled with Saks suits, they do their most serious work in blue jeans. In that way, they retain the look of the youthful idealist—Carville circa *The War Room*, Joe Trippi circa his fourteenth Diet Pepsi of the day. Shrum, on the other hand, is known to amble into the Wayfarer bar in Manchester, New Hampshire, with a purple scarf draped over his shoulders. There will be a Zegna tie around his neck and Hugo Boss socks around his ankles.

Shrum was once a noted schlub himself. In the early '80s, his friends and partners noted his disturbingly irregular bathing habits and astonishingly ugly neckwear. "He basically didn't care about how he looked. He didn't care about being overweight. He didn't have the money to buy fancy clothes," says Harvard Law Professor Laurence Tribe, who has known Shrum since the 1960s. Then, in 1988, he married *Los Angeles Times* society columnist Marylouise Oates. (Oatesie and Shrummy, they call each other.) Oatesie remade Shrummy as a fop, and the new threads perfectly fit his carefully tended image as a consultant: Shrum could sell himself as the luxury brand in Democratic consulting, the Louis Vuitton of strategists.

Indeed, Shrum has become a status symbol in his own right. From his Washington home in Massachusetts Heights, he ran a legendary salon, with a bar stocked with top-shelf liquor and a long dining room table stocked with top-shelf guests. Shrum provides his clients entrée into the highest social strata. He was so close to the doyenne of Democratic fund-raising, Pamela Harriman, that he traveled with her to Barbados and served as an usher at her funeral. It was at his house that Mary Matalin met James Carville, and it was movie mogul Lew Wasserman who set Shrummy up with Oatesie. Warren Beatty and Henry Winkler attended the wedding. It's not a coincidence that rich men making their first run for high office are the ones most drawn to Shrum—from Jon Corzine to John Edwards. The arrivistes find Shrum's insider credentials too powerful to resist. And even many studied politicos find themselves succumbing. According to one Democratic strategist, the Clintons feared Shrum's social power. During the 1992 primary, Shrum served as an adviser to Senator Bob Kerrey, who viciously attacked the Arkansas governor. But, once in the Oval Office, Clinton made a calculated decision to ignore these slights, importing Shrum to help polish his State of the Union speeches. "The Clintons gave Shrum work," says the former White House official, "because they didn't want him as an enemy."

Like any true luxury brand, Shrum delivers highly attentive white-glove service. In the heat of Gore's 2000 campaign, as he traveled the country with the vice president, Shrum still phoned each of his senatorial clients every day. He doesn't just massage the candidates, he cultivates their wives. When he wanted to work on the Kerry campaign, he spent considerable time schmoozing with Teresa Heinz Kerry. He has sent Oatesie shopping with Elizabeth Edwards for campaign outfits. "Shrummy always works the wives hard," says one of his former colleagues. "He lived near Teresa Heinz and used her as a way of getting in. He had convinced her that he was needed."

In the end, Shrum achieves that great cliché of customer service. He becomes more than an employee; he is a friend. There's no better example of this than John Kerry. Shrum first went to work for Kerry on his 1996 Senate race. Although they'd co-mingled at Georgetown soirees and lunched together, the race bonded them. Shrum helped rescue the campaign, providing the decisive change in

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strategy that staved off William Weld's challenge. But their relationship now transcends politics. "They talk about food, wine, European travel, and ideas," says one Democratic operative. Both this summer and last, Shrum traveled to Kerry's summer home in Nantucket so they could spend some quality time together. As Burkett puts it, "There's a tremendous level of comfort and compatibility. The guys like each other. I've seen them involved, and there's an affinity there." Shrum is not shy about announcing this affinity. Colleagues on the campaign report that pet Shrum phrases include: "When John and I were sailing, he said . . ." and "John told me. . . ."

At times, Kerry worries about being seen as his consultant's marionette. During the primaries, he told Shrum he didn't want him to be the public face of the campaign. So, although Shrum prepped Kerry for debates, he was rarely allowed to travel to debate sites—not for post-match spin, not even for behind-the-scenes rapid response. Last November, in an emotional conference call to his staff during which Kerry announced he had just fired campaign manager Jim Jordan, one aide bluntly asked, "Is Shrum now running the campaign?" Kerry replied that he wasn't. "No, look, he's a strategist." But there was an unmistakable irony to Kerry's denial. By firing Jordan, Kerry had removed Shrum's fiercest critic from the campaign. He was, in effect, denying Shrum's influence at the very moment it had become undeniable. The Shrum brand had triumphed once again.

THE STORY OF how Shrum achieved dominance in the Kerry campaign makes for an excellent case study of his infighting style. Despite his longstanding relationship with Kerry, Shrum arrived on the campaign only after a prolonged flirtation with John Edwards. (ABC's daily news roundup, *The Note*, dubbed the competition for his services the "Shrum Primary.") But the Kerry campaign was filled with competing power bases. Rivals called it "Noah's ark" because the campaign had two of everything—pollsters, advertising firms, et cetera. It was a system that seemed almost designed to prevent any individual from obtaining too much influence.

In fact, Kerry practices a fairly democratic style of decision making. He likes his advisers to resolve issues by coming to a consensus. There's no bigger fan of the conference call. Even if he weren't a masterful inside player, Shrum would do well in this system. At Georgetown, he was a collegiate debating champion. "Unless you're prepared to do battle relentlessly, he'll overwhelm you with his intelligence and words. He will not sit back and give up because somebody disagrees with him. Nobody is able to stand up to him and out-argue him," says the consultant Mark Fabiani, who spent stretches of the Gore campaign quarreling with Shrum. But Shrum's powers of persuasion can't always carry the day. It is then, when he fails to win in the conference calls, that he exploits his relationship with Kerry, repeating his case via a back channel. For instance, he used private conversations to convince Kerry to abandon public financing last November. And, during the writing of the candidate's announcement speech in September, Shrum lobbied Kerry hard to adopt his version of the text.

But what distinguishes Shrum isn't just his flair for argument or his relationship with Kerry; it's the skill with which he maneuvers among campaign advisers. He knows how to align himself with stronger factions and how to crush weaker ones. Last fall, a debate raged within the campaign. On one side stood campaign manager Jim Jordan and media adviser Chris Lehane, who wanted the campaign to take a firmer stand against Howard Dean and to have proxies point out the contradictions in the Vermont governor's record. On the other side stood Kerry's Massachusetts-based operatives, such as John Sasso and Tom Kiley, who believed that attacking Dean could redound against Kerry, making him look like a nasty guy. Based on his track record, Shrum's view would have seemed obvious. After all, he has built a reputation for his relentlessly slashing style. Most infamously, during the 1990 Texas governor's primary, his firm produced ads for Jim Mattox leveling nasty, unsupported charges against Ann Richards: "Did she use marijuana, or something worse like cocaine, not as a college kid but as a forty-seven-year-old elected official sworn to uphold the law?" During the Kerry campaign, however, he bucked his aggressive instincts. According to one former Kerry staffer, he did so for the most Machiavellian reason. "He could see the writing on the wall. Jordan was going to be removed eventually. It was just a question of when. It was better for him in the long term to align himself with the Massachusetts Mafia."

Shrum's alliance with the so-called "Massachusetts Mafia" has yielded fantastic results. Over the course of the campaign, the biggest threats to his power have acrimoniously left the campaign. Lehane quit in September, Jordan was fired in November, celebrated adman Jim Margolis unhappily departed in April, and speechwriter Andrei Cherny followed soon after. There are explanations for each of these departures that have nothing to do with Shrum. But the pattern is suspicious. Donna Brazile, a good friend of Shrum's who also tangled with him during the Gore campaign, told me, "Bob is a tenacious fighter. I've been with him. He's a dirty, nasty street fighter. Actually, he's the kind that we desperately need in the Democratic Party. We have so many peace-loving Kumbaya people. Bob doesn't have a problem hitting."

UNFORTUNATELY, SHRUM'S TALENT for fighting his way to power doesn't necessarily translate into a powerful message for his clients. The rap most frequently leveled against him goes something like this: He believes so intensely in economic populism that he deploys it in each and every campaign, whether it is appropriate or not. And, indeed, there are comic examples of Shrum overusing William Jennings Bryan–esque rhetoric. When Bobby Kennedy's ninth-oldest child, Max, launched his hapless campaign for Con-

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gress in 2001, Shrum provided him with rote lines like, "I want to fight for all of you." Coming out of Kennedy's mouth, the populism sounded hilariously phony—a fact that even Kennedy himself conceded in a *New York Times Magazine* profile. Moreover, Shrum campaigns have occasionally been exercises in demagoguery. His 1988 speeches for Gephardt excoriated Ivan Boesky and Wall Street elites; his ads menacingly portrayed the threat of Asian trade.

But the charge of knee-jerk populism is overblown. Most of Shrum's rhetoric is less ham-fisted than that employed during the Kennedy campaign and less vitriolic than that of the Gephardt race. Protectionism, for instance, only makes rare appearances. And, while he does use the verb "to fight" frequently in speeches and slogans, he's hardly the only Democrat to do so. Even Clinton's 1992 campaign ubiquitously sprinkled "fighting" words throughout speeches (e.g., pledging to "fight for the forgotten middle class"). One Democratic consultant, not particularly friendly to Shrum, told me, "What are you supposed to say, 'I'm working on changing health care?' No, 'I'm fighting for health care' works much better. We all use that same formulation. Bob is unfortunately the one guy who gets beat up for it."

And Shrum has hardly steered the Kerry campaign in a "people versus the powerful" direction. In fact, almost every time Kerry advisers have pushed to adopt populist lines, Shrum has argued against them. Last October, aides heatedly debated how to defuse the Dean challenge. A slew of advisers—from Jordan to Cherny to strategist Mark Mellman—worried that voters viewed Kerry as a creature of Washington. To counteract this impression, they wanted spots and speeches to emphasize his lifelong combat against "special interests," from his days as a prosecutor to his senatorial investigation of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International. Mellman and Jordan pushed for Kerry to describe himself as "fighting" for the public interest, using vocabulary straight out of the old populist playbook. But Shrum argued that voters would never buy the idea of the patrician Kerry as the defender of the everyman. (And, in private, he told one colleague he didn't want to be blamed for a failed foray into populism.) Instead, Shrum wanted Kerry to argue that he, not Dean, was the genuine progressive in the race. While Dean had flirted with the Democratic Leadership Council in the '90s, Kerry had been toiling in the Senate on behalf of liberal causes. This was the rare argument Shrum didn't win. Beginning in late October, Kerry speeches began warning lobbyists, "Don't let the door hit you on the way out." Soon after, Kerry ads started ominously depicting lobbyists trekking through Gucci Gulch.

In truth, Shrum's greatest weakness is not the ideological inflexibility for which he's often derided—even in private he did not urge Kerry to take more liberal positions on gay marriage and the Iraq war—but rather a strategic myopia. According to one consultant who has worked with Shrum, in the heat of a campaign, "He's far more tuned into focus groups and polling data than moral arguments." He has a gift for churning out pithy lines and spin that will win a newscycle but a harder time devising a grand message for the campaign. He may be an excellent tactician, but former congressman Tony Coelho, who chaired the Gore campaign, told me, "My concern is how good of a strategist he is. In the campaign, Shrum against Karl Rove, I'm not sure that we end up with the long stick." Indeed, during the Kerry campaign, Shrum hasn't produced anything comparable to the leitmotifs that Rove provided Bush in 2000. There's nothing akin to Bush's "compassionate conservatism" or his relentless emphasis on "restoring honor and dignity to the Oval Office"—or, for that matter, to Edwards's "two Americas."

The absence of message is visible in Shrum's ads. In many of the spots, Kerry speaks directly into the camera. (Shrum ads don't have many visual metaphors.) Admittedly, the ads all touch on potent themes—at least focus groups have responded to them. In one recent ad called "Paperwork," Kerry describes a major problem with U.S. health care: "It's all paperwork. Administrative overhead. ... We will save literally billions of dollars in health care costs in America by becoming more streamlined and more efficient." But, ideally, political ads should do more than turn focus-group dials in a positive direction. They should build a cumulative impression of Kerry. "Who is going to remember his outrage over paperwork?" one operative asked me. And, unfortunately, the spots aren't well-suited to building a cumulative impression. They haven't had consistent phrases or ideas. The operative quips, "What are they on—their thirteenth or fourteenth slogan?"

There's another surprising weakness in the campaign: Kerry's oratory. Given Shrum's reputation for producing spellbinders, Kerry's major speeches have been remarkably bland. At least in part, this can be traced to Shrum. Aside from George McGovern's 1972 "Come Home America" convention address, Shrum has produced truly great speeches only for Ted Kennedy. As Adam Clymer told me, "His best collaboration was with Kennedy. Bob knows how to write things that Ted says well." The problem is that the rhetoric that works for Kennedy often falls flat for other candidates. A cadence and compound sentence structure that sounds gorgeous flowing from Kennedy's mouth sounds antique and windy coming from Kerry. ("Today, with confidence in the courage of our people to change what is wrong and do what is right, I come here to say why I am a candidate for President of the United States.") And, in the end, Shrum exacerbates Kerry's shortcomings. "Kerry has a tendency toward florid, long-winded oratory," says one former campaign adviser. "Bob certainly isn't the guy to correct that."

In his work for John Kerry so far, Shrum has made a string of right choices—not to attack Dean, not to accept public financing, not to excessively deploy populist rhetoric. But the convention marks the moment when the campaign can no longer rely on tactics to mask the absence of strategy. Kerry needs a message, a big reason for voters to pick him. Without one, Bob Shrum might find himself zero for eight. ■

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Brando's Lives

THE NEWS OF MARLON Brando's death on July 1 brought two kinds of sadness: regret that his life had closed, and regret that, artistically speaking, it had closed long ago. His last performance of any interest was in *The Freshman* (1990), and that was only a mirror image of the Vito Corleone he had created in 1972. Little that Brando had done in his last thirty years was commensurate with his genius.

MARLON BRANDO

The sting of his death brought a memory flash—of a stage performance. In 1946 he played the young poet Marchbanks in one of Katharine Cornell's revivals of Shaw's *Candida*. Brando didn't have the speech or carriage of the earl's nephew that Marchbanks is, but I have never seen a performance that convinced me more completely that a man is the artist he is said to be. Early in the play someone says to him, "It should make you tremble to think that . . . the great gift of a poet may be laid upon you." Marchbanks replies: "It does not make me tremble. It is the want of it in others that makes me tremble." I can hear Brando still.

I had already been following him closely. In 1943, at holiday time, a children's play of mine was produced by Erwin Piscator's Dramatic Workshop at the New School in New York. Brando was a student there and had been given the wordless role in my play of a guard at a king's court. At one point, meant to be comic, he was hit on the head and fell. Brando, without the help of the director (Mrs. Piscator), devised a collapse that was original and funny. The production was later moved uptown to the Adelphi Theater for a series of Easter matinées, so Brando made his professional debut in this bit part, getting hit on the head.

I asked about him at the school and was told that he was one of the more gifted students but that he was already "difficult." Apparently he had in him what Poe called "the imp of the perverse." Precisely because Brando was so gifted and had so apparent a potential, he was offhand about acting, bothering to be serious about it only when he actually was performing.

His first notable Broadway role, for which I had been looking out, was a short-pants youngster in something called *I Remember Mama*, and then he electrified audiences with his one taut scene in Maxwell Anderson's *Truckline Café*. This much-admired performance led to Marchbanks and eventually to Stanley Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, which I saw twice. What I remember first about it is Stanley's cuticle. The setting had two rooms; at one point early in the play Blanche DuBois was in one room upbraiding her sister Stella about the brute she had married. Brando, unseen by the women, was standing in the other room, listening to Blanche's outburst, calmly biting the cuticle on one finger. This gesture told us everything we needed to know about Stanley's reaction to the outburst—and about the probable course of the play.

Soon Hollywood beckoned, of course, and Brando acquiesced when he was offered an interesting role—a wheelchair-bound war veteran in *The Men* (1950). His talent was recognized, but the film had small impact. Next he did Stanley Kowalski on screen, and the world was shaken.

To itemize his film career—a total of forty-one pictures—and to judge whether each was worth Brando's presence is not to me the most important matter just now. Rather, a contradiction presses. What became patent early on in Hollywood, what Brando obviously wanted to be known because he often talked about it in interviews, was his attitude toward acting. The imp of the perverse had apparently enlarged in him and now included a total scoff at any view of acting as an art, even as a respectable occupation for a serious person. It is common in the screen careers of stars, especially if they came from the theater, that they are at first very picky about the roles they accept, then gradually slip into the currents and standards of a film career with less and less choosiness. But it was more than that with Brando: his very spotty career, ranging from some peaks in the history of world film to some sheer embarrassments, seems less the result of Hollywood pressures than a sort of sloth, almost to nourish his loathing for the whole business.

One of the elements that apparently increased his loathing was the money. In his earliest days he could tease about acting as piffle when he was living at a relatively sane level. But when the money started to pour in, he was, it seems, twice affected: he wanted as much money as he could get at the same time that he thought the huge sums certified the silliness of the work. (By 1977 he was paid $3.7 million, plus percentages of the gross, for twelve days' work on two Superman movies.) His eventual monstrous obesity seemed a clear sign of his hatred for Hollywood. "You're paying for this waistline," he seemed to be jeering at the film world.

He could behave as he did because he was so golden at the box office and so fertile a publicity subject. (His personal life, not to be detailed here, helped too.) Still, the question persists: why? Why did he behave as he did? Leonard Bernstein, golden enough and glamorous enough in the music world, never animadverted against concertizing. Martha Graham, certainly not golden but certainly an icon, never spewed on dancing. Why did Brando spout as he did? Yes, the imp of the perverse had been there from the start, but was there something else, a secret?

David Thomson, in an astute obituary article about Brando, wrote: "It is striking . . . that his death comes at a moment when America's maturity is tragically necessary yet tormentingly distant." Thus

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Thomson implies that the vagaries of Brando's career were related to the general social and political climate of his lifetime, an insight supported by his recurrent involvement in social and political movements seemingly as a version of penance.

I would add one other possibility. His perversity in his earliest days, spurred by Poe's imp, may just have been a form of vanity, a nonchalance because he had to worry much less about the future than his contemporaries did. But as success and fame arrived, he may have become more and more acutely aware that his profession had low cultural standing in America. (Quite unlike Leonard Bernstein's and Martha Graham's.) His veneration of John Gielgud, when they played together in *Julius Caesar* (1953), supports this view. Gielgud came from a society where a great actor was a national eminence, not a mere celebrity. It is inconceivable that Brando could ever have said about Gielgud any of the things (according to Peter Manso's biography) he said about himself. "I am not an artist. I *hate* when people say I'm an artist." Or: "Acting is a bum's life, in that it leads to perfect self-indulgence. You get paid for doing nothing, and it all adds up to nothing." During Brando's lifetime, America produced fine actors—Fredric March, for prime instance—and the fact that they were not regarded as they would have been in some other countries possibly confirmed Brando's view. In fact Gielgud says in his autobiography that he offered Brando a chance to work in another world. "I begged him to play Hamlet, and said that I would like to direct him if he did." Also: "I thought he would have made a wonderful Oedipus." Brando said that he had no interest in returning to the stage. Perhaps by this time he was in love with his attitudes toward acting and didn't want to risk becoming as serious as Gielgud about it. His very last work was a voice-over for a character in an animated film that has not yet been released.

Well, now Brando begins a new life as a figure in history, still a paradox. He may be even more of one to those who view his work in the future: less because of his comments about acting, which may fade, than because of the difference between the heights and the sloughs of his career. The best of actors have their ups and downs, but not many of them have his genius. Partly as possible truth about Brando, partly as solace about him for myself, I remember the Marchbanks line: "It is the want of it in others that makes me tremble." ■

Nicholas Lemann
What, Me Worry?

On Paradise Drive
How We Live Now (And Always Have) in the Future Tense
By David Brooks
(Simon and Schuster, 304 pp., $25)

A FUNNY MAN IS AN ANGRY man. David Brooks sets himself up in his new book as an amiable, sunny-dispositioned "comic sociologist," but something that feels awfully like hostility (and that is a lot more interesting, therefore, than the niceness that characterizes Brooks's official persona) regularly pokes through, like a rampaging weed in a genteel flowerbed. Here, for example, are "Ubermoms," one of Brooks's amusing categories:

> You can spot them easily, because they generally weigh less than their children. They may have given birth to their youngest one, say, twelve hours before, but they still have washboard abs and buttocks firmer than footballs. That's because even at the moment of conception, which occurs during highly aerobic multiorgasmic intercourse, the prospective alpha mother is doing special breast exercises to prevent sagging. While her love partner is contentedly dozing at her side in postconnubial bliss, as his sperm is breaching the membrane

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> of her incredibly fit and fertile egg, she is staring at the ceiling calculating which year her child will be ready to enter nursery school and when she can run to be chairperson of the school auction.

Mee-ow!

And here are residents of the urban "hippoisie cool zone":

> It's cooler to be poor and damaged than wealthy and accomplished, which is why rich and beautiful supermodels stand around in bars trying to look like Sylvia Plath and the Methadone Sisters, with their post-hygiene hair, a red-rimmed, teary look around their eyes, their orange, just-escaped-from-the-mental-hospital blouses, and the sort of facial expression that suggests they're about forty-five seconds away from a spectacularly successful suicide attempt.

And—one more—the professional classes in "inner-ring suburbs":

> Eventually these advanced-degree moguls cave in and buy the toys they really want: the heated bathroom floors to protect their bare feet, the power showers with nozzles every six inches, the mudrooms the size of your first apartment, the sixteen-foot refrigerators with the through-the-door goat cheese and guacamole delivery systems, the cathedral ceilings in the master bedroom that seem to be compensation for not quite getting to church.

There is nothing wrong with being not-nice, Lord knows, and Brooks is regularly funnier than he struck me as being in the passages that I have just quoted. The puzzle of *On Paradise Drive* is the mismatch between its tone and its stated message, which is that the time has come for us to celebrate the genius of American middle-class suburban culture.

One can easily understand the contrarian appeal of Brooks's supposed project. Although the suburban middle class is certainly not in any actual danger, it does often get a bad press. Most accounts of the situation in which most Americans live have a tone of grim concern or even crisis, as Brooks rather gleefully points out. This isn't a recent phenomenon (think of *Bowling Alone* or *Habits of the Heart*) or a phenomenon only of the past half-century (think of *The Organization Man* and *The Lonely Crowd*). It has been a constant in writing about America since Europeans began coming here on inspection tours before the founding of the United States. As a result, it is hard to figure out from the published record what precisely accounts for the success of the dominant culture in what is now, for good or ill, the world's dominant nation. And that is the task that Brooks sets for himself: defining "the First Suburban Empire."

His means for accomplishing it is a satiric grand tour of the country, accomplished first geographically and then through life stages. In prose that is bouncy and always straining for a laugh, Brooks riffs us through a collection of "archetypes"—or, more accurately, stereotypes—that will be familiar to readers of his magazine work: Patio Man and Realtor Mom, dutifully conformist college students and overscheduled sports kids, cell-phone-clutching businessmen and self-regarding magazine editors. In the manner of Tom Wolfe, who is obviously a heavy influence on Brooks, he builds characters, and in the aggregate the country, from the outside in, through recitations of what he supposes to be their brand-name consumer preferences. Brooks nails what Wolfe calls "status details" quite well, and then he goes for the laugh with a hyperbolizing twist, such as calling Patio Man's street Trajan's Column Terrace, or having him contemplate roasting a bison on his new outdoor grill, or, in another part of the forest, comparing my ex-wife to Goethe. It says a lot about most journalistic and academic writing on the suburbs that Brooks, merely by employing a light tone and displaying an interest in commercial culture, and without having engaged in back-breaking authorial labors, achieves the feeling of being a fresh voice on this much worked-over subject.

For some reason Brooks has elected never to say in *On Paradise Drive* that he is a conservative, though he doesn't hesitate to proclaim his beliefs in other venues. He occasionally tosses in an evenhanded though somewhat rote-sounding condemnation of conservative writers who hand-wring about the state of American society (differently from the liberals, of course—think of Robert Bork). Still, his conservatism manifests itself. One sign is the high ration of venom in his descriptions of liberals:

> The anthropology professor can stride through life knowing she was unanimously elected chairwoman of her crunchy suburb's sustainable-growth study seminar. She wears the locally approved status symbols: the Tibet-motif dangly earrings, the Andrea Dworkin–inspired hairstyle, the peasant blouse, and the public-broadcasting tote bag. She is, furthermore, the best outdoorswoman in the Georgia O'Keeffe Hiking Club, and her paper on twentieth-century Hopi protest graffiti was much admired at last year's Multidisciplinary Out-Group Research Conference. No wonder she feels so righteous in her beliefs.

Another is his lack of a sense that there is any real wrong or misfortune in American society—no want, no discrimination, no unfairness. By focusing on the suburbs, Brooks has pre-emptively taken out of the discussion the parts of the country where most poor people live, the cities and rural areas; but he does, perhaps by way of demonstrating that he is being unideological in these pages, mention a time or two that there are some problems out there. These rare passages are stated so dutifully and perfunctorily compared with everything else—"We devote the highest percentage of GDP to health care than any other people, and have the best hospitals, but more than 40 million of us are uninsured. We are incredibly rich, but our distribution of income is strikingly unequal, and the American welfare state is much smaller than that of comparable nations"—that they actually communicate unconcern. At the same time, Brooks's summary of anyone else's criticisms of American culture, especially foreigners' criticism, fairly vibrates with rage, and so it communicates that he regards the project of America-criticism as not significantly different from the project of America-hatred, and inherently illegitimate and evil: "They feel spiritually superior to Americans but are economically, politically, and socially outranked. They conclude that the world is diseased, that it rewards the wrong values. They have no real strategy to bring the U.S. low, just their rage, their burning sense of unjust inferiority, their envy mixed with snobbery."

Brooks's understanding of the United States as a collection of happy, materially

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prosperous types—this is his second book in which he refers to bourgeois America in his title as "paradise"—also implicitly rules out the possibility that anybody might be doing better than anybody else, let alone that some are doing well at the expense of others. Explicitly, Brooks insists, "There is no one single elite in America. Hence, there is no definable establishment to be oppressed by and to rebel against. Everybody can be an aristocrat within his own Olympus." Even if one believes that all *ressentiment* is unjustified, it is so widespread an emotion (residing, for starters, in the president of the United States himself) that removing it from the discussion robs one of a lot of interesting material about American culture.

WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT Brooks's putative lack of politics in *On Paradise Drive* is that it takes out of his reach what would be, if he were writing as an "out" conservative, the weapon most readily at hand: portraying Middle America as a great civilization threatened by the liberal culture on the coasts. That is a stance that works rhetorically, but one can almost recite its particulars from memory. It is hard to imagine a restatement of the defense of the middle class against unfair attack that could come across as original.

Brooks has set a more challenging task for himself, which is to offer a version of mainstream American culture that is persuasively celebratory and that explains its extensive influence on the rest of the world. "Comic sociologist" though he may be, Brooks obviously aspires to a status grander than that of a mere jokester; and finally his book does not lack for soaring rhetoric. He wants to be a theoretician of ordinary American society. This is a project that has defeated many writers more scholarly and thoughtful than he. If one is writing about the Founding Fathers, say, there is a natural fit between the magnitude of the evidence at hand and the grandeur of the sociopolitical result. But everyday life in America today—if one understands it, as Brooks does, as possessing world-historical significance (he glibly invokes Whitman, Emerson, John Winthrop, Crèvecoeur, Jonathan Edwards, and others as witnesses in his case)—presents a more difficult problem, because the material itself is exceedingly quotidian. Brooks is obviously aware that it isn't easy to make something profound out of the world of SUVs and big-box retail outlets. His relentlessly upbeat language and his stated eschewal of ideology only increase the difficulty.

THAT BROOKS DOES NOT DELIVER on the promise of his book may merely be a sign that he has set an insuperable task for himself. Almost no interesting and valuable portrait of the American suburbs tries to make a big point, or to have its characters and settings represent anything more than themselves. And *On Paradise Drive* feels hasty, stitched-together, under-researched. There are problems of continuity in the argument: in an early passage, for example, Brooks appears to sign on to the idea that well-educated "hard-core meritocrats" now form "a mass upper class" of millionaires, but in a later passage he approvingly offers Thomas Stanley's quite different version of the American millionaire as an indifferent student who didn't get an elite education. American society as a whole comes across in this book as a giant version of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, where Brooks lives. Brooks mentions a lot of other locales, but his rendition of them and the people who live in them does not have the same tone of assurance and familiarity. Driving around these places on short visits and combing through marketing statistics may produce some interesting results if your eye is as sharp as Brooks's; but it is striking that Brooks nails his own sociological microclimate—professional, Eastern—far better than any other.

Then there is a more profound problem. We may grant Brooks an exception for people with Andrea Dworkin–inspired hairstyles, but in order to succeed at his self-assigned task, he has to like—I mean really like—typical bourgeois American suburbanites. At the level of generality, he does like them; but when he encounters them individually (individually as types, that is), his heart just isn't in the project of liking them. Immigrants are an exception: Brooks's descriptions of them are genuinely empathetic and approving. But when he gets into the belly of the suburban beast—white, cheerful, subdivision-dwelling, in business—Brooks adopts a tone that strikes me as patronizing rather than truly admiring:

> They are imagining waterskiing buddies and Little League teams. They are imagining happy high school graduations, even though that high school may still be nothing but a steel frame. They are imagining outings with friends at home-style Italian restaurants that don't exist yet, outings to Science Olympiads with unformed teams, road trips to spring training with friends they haven't met, who are now sitting in their old suburb and haven't contemplated moving here. But they will.

Or (remember, Brooks is describing people he sees as embodying the genius of American society):

> They will endure hour upon hour of jargonics, the unique sales-conference language, receiving valuable advice on how they can prioritize their cost-effective operational performance and increase network functionality while magnifying their brand power through strategic B-to-B partnering in ways that will leverage their competitive-advantage matrixes without sacrificing any of their core-competency components or their multiple-vendor, mission-critical supply-chain service-provider solution resources.

Or, in describing politely ambitious college students: "They are engaged in objectless striving, working furiously at one level, so they can be admitted into the next and more exclusive level of striving." How different are these sentiments—not the way they are expressed, but the sentiments themselves—from what you would hear from the sort of censorious commencement speaker that Brooks would almost certainly eviscerate?

Reading along in *On Paradise Drive*, I felt certain that I knew where Brooks was going: he would find most of his

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subjects to be good people who were leading too-shallow lives, for which the remedy would be the kind of "national-greatness conservatism" that he and his former colleagues at *The Weekly Standard* have been advocating for the past several years. There were passages that seemed to exist partly to set the stage for the introduction of the concept of national greatness: Brooks wondering whether suburban materialism has a spiritual base, or complaining about college students' lack of a sense of mission. At one point Brooks even seems to be longing for a return of the old regime: "The best members of the WASP aristocracy know that privilege corrodes virtue in certain ways. They worked up a moral language to fight that. We have only the dimmest idea of how the achievement ethos corrodes virtue in certain other ways. And we have not begun to come up with a way to counter it."

But every time Brooks walks up to this particular precipice, he backs away, and returns to his happy little tour of suburban America, with its characteristic mockery in the guise of praise. His decision not to call for a series of grand, ennobling, redeeming national projects may stem from a desire to keep the tone light and non-partisan, or to avoid getting into arguments with his critics about the chief manifestation of national-greatness conservatism presently before us, the war in Iraq. But it is a decision with heavy consequences for his book.

Brooks must find moral profundity in suburban civilization in its actual, mundane form, rather than in the form that it would assume if provided with a mission. This, it turns out, is a lot of work. Brooks has to strain to detect transcendence in the very shopping magazines ("These magazines are about aspiration") and malls ("What is truly striking about this country is how material things are shot through with enchantment") that he has spent page after page gently, or not so gently, satirizing. He has contradicted the tone, and even the stated position, of significant portions of the book, those in which Brooks appears to detect a hollowness in his subject. He has to employ a kind of ad-copy prose that is a sign that he has drawn a difficult debating position: "The old impulses, fevers, and fantasies still play themselves out amid the Palm Pilots, the Hummers, the closet organizers, and the travel-team softball leagues."

Brooks's argument is that even if most Americans aspire merely to the ordinary, the universality of their aspiration elevates our society to distinctiveness and connects it with the moral profundity of the Puritan "errand in the wilderness." Brooks has forbidden us, in one of his *New York Times* columns, to think of him as a neoconservative, but it seems inarguable, at least, that he is not a paleoconservative—someone who finds ordinary life inherently noble, and grand moral and political passions inherently dangerous. It just isn't in his playbook to praise the typical suburbanite, sincerely and with a straight face, merely for wanting to live out his or her life among family and cars and malls. He can satirize; he can chastise; he can, straining, detect a kind of holiness (hence his repeated use of the word "paradise") in his subjects' ambitions. What he cannot do is celebrate them for what, evidently, they are.

Brooks, we know from his columns, very much dislikes realists, and he is trying very, very hard here to give us a nation of moralists, when all the evidence that he presents runs in the other direction. At most, his subjects, if he is right about their predilection for super-sized consumer products, are practitioners merely of national-bigness conservatism. Hence the visible strain in the passages that are supposed to deliver the heartfelt praise on which the book's point depends:

> America is the solution to bourgeois flatness, to materialistic complacency, to mass-media shallowness, because America, with all its utopian possibilities, arouses the energies and the most strenuous efforts. America is the answer to insularity, to balkanization, to complacency, to timidity, because America is a set of compulsions pulling people out of their narrow and trivial concerns and lifting their sights to the distant hopes.

American society, especially the center of it, is an important subject, and it is also an accessible one, but it presents more literary and intellectual perils than you would expect. In cleverly and successfully avoiding some of them—artificial gloominess, facile prescription, political hectoring—David Brooks has let himself fall prey to what is, in this realm, the most venerable peril of them all: boosterism. ■

Mark Lilla

From Here to Eternity

RESISTING HISTORY: HISTORICISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS IN GERMAN-JEWISH THOUGHT
By David N. Myers
(Princeton University Press, 253 pp., $29.95)

NOT ONLY THE VICTORS write history. The defeated, too, have stories to tell, and theirs can shape the future long after the victors are dead and buried. As Wolfgang Schivelbusch recently showed in his timely book, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*, the historical literature of defeat has many uses and effects. It can breed resentments and leave a people dreaming unproductively of the world they have lost; it can also, more ambiguously, inspire hopes of restoring the status quo ante, of fulfilling a prophecy of future glory, of creating a wholly new social order. Schivelbusch concerns himself with relatively recent history, comparing reactions to defeat in the American South after the Civil War, in France after the Franco-Prussian War, and in Germany after World War I. Another sort of book could have been written about the role of defeat in religious history, and its powerful impetus to hope and action over the course of millennia.

The most self-conscious and elaborate reaction to historical defeat that we

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possess is Augustine's *City of God Against the Pagans*. In the period leading up to the sack of Rome, Christian thinkers were seduced by a progressive view of world history as the story of man's continuous rise from his original fallen condition, through the Jewish covenants, to the birth, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus, and ending with the establishment of his church and its unification with imperial power when Constantine converted. This narrative, which was codified in the works of the fourth-century bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, lost its power overnight with Rome's collapse. Augustine knew he had a serious crisis on his hands. Why, the faithful asked, has God's providence abandoned us—or had it never guided us? The pagans, on the other hand, were torn between gloating over Christianity's defeat and blaming it for sapping Rome's strength.

Augustine saw that the only way to address these worries and charges adequately would be to formulate an entirely new concept of providential history. He did this with the doctrine of the two cities, which distinguishes the heavenly city of God's eternal church living outside of time from the earthly historical city dominated by human sinfulness, a city in which God occasionally intercedes for reasons of his own that we are unable to fathom. This conception of history, human and divine, would prove the most important within Christendom for the next millennium and a half.

The problem of historical defeat is even knottier in Judaism. Between the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. and the founding of the state of Israel in 1948, history seemed to have turned its back on the Jews. The rabbinic establishment returned the compliment, encouraging a view of Jewish life suspended between the covenants of the past and the promise of future redemption, floating somewhere above the mundane history of the Gentiles. Occasionally Gentile history would intrude and the Jews would suffer, but whether God was trying to send a message, punishing his people for their sins, remained a matter of theological speculation. Jewish life was elsewhere, existing in another dimension.

As the Christian churches regained worldly power in the Middle Ages, they revived the classical art of the chronicle and began flirting with Eusebian history again, producing a new literature whose most beautiful monument was Bossuet's *Discourse on Universal History*, which appeared in 1681. But by then the secular study of history was already well established, and by the end of the eighteenth century the burden of responsibility had shifted. After the Enlightenment, and certainly in the wake of the French Revolution, the challenge was no longer to see how worldly events fit into a coherent account of God's providence; it was to secure a place for religion within a thoroughly secularized account of world history. That challenge proved as great for modern Christian thought as the fall of Rome had been for Augustine.

THROUGH THE EIGHTEENTH century Judaism managed to avoid this challenge, and history remained essentially Gentile history. While there were isolated, if notable, attempts to sort through the sources critically in the early modern period, the biblical stories and the tales of the rabbis were generally taken to be factual. All that would change, drastically and traumatically, with emancipation in the early nineteenth century. And, as David Myers maintains in his fine new book, nowhere was the challenge of secular history more keenly felt than among the Jews of Germany.

One virtue of Myers's book is that he places his subject within the wider "crisis of historicism" that shaped nineteenth- and early twentieth-century German thinking about every aspect of social life, from politics to religion and the arts. He recognizes that the development of critical historical methods first posed a challenge to Protestant Christianity, which relied heavily on a literalist reading of Scripture. What Albert Schweitzer later called "the quest of the historical Jesus" was a dramatic, if ultimately pathetic, attempt to apply all the tools of *Religionswissenschaft*—the higher biblical criticism, philology, archaeology—to salvaging Jesus's original spiritual message from the mythical past and reconciling it with the spirit of the modern age. The path from David Friedrich Strauss's *The Life of Jesus* (1835) to Adolf von Harnack's *The Essence of Christianity* (1900) was a seemingly direct one.

Yet this approach to Christianity's history reached a crisis, just as Eusebius's had, due to a violent historical episode—in this case, World War I. The reconciliation of Protestantism with modern history suddenly looked to be a monstrous thing, a form of idolatry. A reaction followed, led by the great theologian Karl Barth, whose influential commentary *Epistle to the Romans* (1919) restated in modern, existential language the Augustinian position that human history is a disordered world governed by sin, not by God, who stands above it beckoning as *das ganz Andere*, "the completely other."

The challenge of modern historicism appeared first within Protestantism, but it took its most acute form in Jewish thought. Myers makes a good case for this view, though it would have been much strengthened had he been clearer about the concept of "historicism." The challenge of the new secular history was in fact a double one. In the first wave, the new scholarly methods worked as an acid on the historical claims of tradition, pointing out incoherencies in Scripture, the implausibility of the chronology, contradictions with the archaeological record, and more. As a result, Scripture now appeared a very human document, produced by men in specific circumstances to meet particular needs; its aura was lost. Myers has a good chapter on the development of Jewish studies (*Wissenschaft des Judentums*) in the early nineteenth century and the naïve hope of figures such as Heinrich Graetz that the historical criticism of sources and the establishment of a plausible, non-mythical chronology of the Jewish past would simultaneously raise the status of the Jews in non-Jewish eyes and contribute to rational reform of Jewish religious practices. Instead, Jewish history came to appear, in Myers's image, as little more than "pearls without a thread," discrete moments in a chronology without theme or purpose. The "use and disadvantage of history for life," as Nietzsche called the problem, was now a Jewish problem.

BUT THERE WAS A SECOND CHALlenge of historicism that can be summarized in a word: Hegel. He is nowhere mentioned in Myers's book. While the new historians of the nineteenth century were toiling away in the archives, contextualizing the past into dust, Hegel managed to step back and to reconstruct a rational, non-providential chronology of all human activity, running back to earliest societies and down to the modern bureaucratic state. One does not begin to understand modern historicism if one ignores the tension between these two approaches and the subtle way they worked together in nineteenth-century German culture as

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a whole, beginning with German Protestantism. While the *Bibelwissenschaftler* were demythologizing the Christian past, Hegel and his disciples were demonstrating how the development of consciousness led necessarily to the point where human beings came to see themselves as divine, and that this fundamental historical turning point was represented in human consciousness by Christian revelation. Since the incarnation of Christ, world history has been little more than the working out of this discovery within Christendom—and nowhere else. Nothing the academic historians discovered could possibly gainsay that claim. And while the Hegelian view implied that Christian history was coming to a close in the late Protestant age, it also changed the image of Christianity from Voltaire's *l'infame* to the very cradle of modernity.

If we read the different versions of Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, we see that he had trouble fitting Judaism into this historical scheme. Nineteenth-century Jewish thinkers had equal trouble with Hegel, though a few intrepid souls, such as Samuel Hirsch and Nachman Krochmal (both ignored by Myers), tried to tinker with Hegel's dialectic to make Judaism come out on top. The effort was doomed to failure, because Jewish history to that point could hardly be interpreted as a tale of worldly triumph. In this sense, though, the Jews were ahead of the modern liberal Protestants, who would not get their historical comeuppance until World War I (though farsighted theologians like Nietzsche's friend Franz Overbeck could already see the writing on the wall in the closing decades of the nineteenth century). Alert Jews not only realized that the Hegelian schema was an invidiously Christian one, they also saw that it prejudicially denied to revelation its rightful role as history's judge. Religion did not belong on history's slaughter bench; it existed to place human history in the docket.

THE BULK OF MYERS'S BOOK is given over to affectionate portraits of four such Jewish thinkers who "resisted history": Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig, Leo Strauss, and Isaac Breuer. The pairing of Cohen and Rosenzweig is now familiar in accounts of modern Jewish thought, and Myers adds little to our understanding of their works or relations. Cohen, though trained in a Jewish theological seminary as a young man, was one of the founders of the neo-Kantian philosophical movement in Marburg in the 1870s. In the 1880s, he returned to thinking and writing in earnest about Judaism, in large measure due to the new anti-Semitic German nationalism expressed by important figures such as the historian Heinrich Treitschke. Cohen was a leading proponent of the German-Jewish symbiosis, which earned him the (justified) scorn of young Zionists such as Martin Buber. But against the historicists of the nineteenth century who wished to pass as Germans, Cohen developed a view of Judaism as a religion that codified in social life fundamental moral truths whose source was supra-historical. His posthumously published *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism* was an ingenious book that made a forthright case for Judaism as the origin of the fundamental values to which Christian Germany was attached, and which took philosophical form in the moral writings of Kant.

Franz Rosenzweig, Cohen's young friend and admirer, shared his mentor's pride in the Jewish heritage but thought it unwise to link that heritage to Christianity, let alone to contemporary German-Protestant life. His theological strategy, worked out in quasi-mystical language in *The Star of Redemption* in 1921, was to depict Christianity in Hegelian terms as an inherently historical and secularizing religion responsible for shaping the modern world in time, while portraying Judaism as living outside historical time through the recurring cycle of its religious calendar and its fixed laws. History was for the goyim, eternity was for the Jews, and redemption was for both at the end of time.

The less conventional chapters of Myers's book are those devoted to the much-maligned philosopher Leo Strauss and the relatively unknown religious thinker Isaac Breuer. Owing to his American disciples' close association with contemporary neoconservatism, Strauss is read primarily today—when he is read at all by the wider public—as a political thinker. Central to his political thought was the critical analysis of historicism, which Strauss depicted as developing out of the modern break with classical political philosophy, and leading inevitably to the relativism and the nihilism of the twentieth century. But, as Myers reminds us, this justly famous attack on modern historicism had roots in Strauss's earliest writings on Zionism, biblical criticism, and religious law, and in his work for Jewish research organizations in the 1920s. Strauss knew Rosenzweig, dedicated his own book on Spinoza to him, and until his death kept up a lively correspondence on Jewish matters with Gershom Scholem.

Only recently has academic Jewish studies in the United States begun to take Strauss more seriously and to see him in this German-Jewish context, which is a welcome change. Strauss's views on the "theological-political" predicament are hard to summarize even for adepts, and the few pages Myers devotes to them are not always easy to follow. But the fundamental point—that Strauss's attention to the religious and political dimensions of law, the tension between reason and revelation, and the art of esotericism had its source in the evident crisis of historicism of the early twentieth century—is a sound one and well made.

MYERS'S CHAPTER ON ISAAC Breuer, despite some repetitions and infelicities, is to be welcomed for expanding the discussion beyond the predictable figures. Breuer, who was born in 1883, was the grandson of Samson Raphael Hirsch, the rabbi who was an early critic of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement and who is regarded as the founder of Orthodox Judaism. The grandson was not a systematic thinker, but he was a gifted writer of novels and journalistic polemics who succeeded in giving voice to Judaism's messianic heritage in vibrant modern prose. His novel defending Orthodox Judaism against its cultured despisers, *The New Kuzari*, was widely read, if not universally admired. And his essays claiming that World War I had cleared the ground for a new messianic age found an echo among frustrated young Jews not unlike the echo that Barth's writings found among Protestants in the interwar period, a comparison that Myers helpfully makes. There are genuine parallels between Barth's depiction of revelation as the point where the tangent of the divine meets the circle of human history and Breuer's discussion of the "metahistorical" quality of Jewish revelation. Breuer's concept of revelation complicated his views on Zionism; he rejected its mundane and secular orientation; but wanted to cultivate its messianic orientation. He eventually moved to Palestine, but he never accepted the Zionism of his day.

Myers's interesting book ends here,

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which is a pity. It is disappointing that a work about the modern Jewish encounter with the problem of history does not extend the story further and consider the Jewish "return to history" with the founding of Israel. How, one wonders, has that event changed thinking about Jewish history, and history more generally, among thoughtful Jews? What are we to make, for example, of the enormous contemporary influence in Israel of a mystical thinker such as Rabbi Avraham Kook, whose messianic writings about the world-historical significance of Israel's founding helped to inspire the radical settlers' movement, and thereby enormously complicated Israel's life with its neighbors?

Myers does not mention Kook, nor Israeli scholars such as Aviezer Ravitsky, who have kept us informed about contemporary theological debates among the believers regarding Jewish history and Zionism since 1948. American Jewish studies today is strangely fascinated by Weimar, and seems to show rather less interest in contemporary Israel in all its religious and intellectual complexity. It would be interesting to speculate on why the study of Weimar has come to play such an important role in Jewish and German studies over the past few decades. Perhaps in our current cultural mood we find historical defeat more aesthetically compelling than historical achievement and engagement with history. Or perhaps facing up to triumph would require too much revision of the traditional defeatist accounts of the Jewish past, and a difficult confrontation with the empowered Jewish present. ■

Eric Arnesen
After Degradation

A NATION UNDER OUR FEET: BLACK POLITICAL STRUGGLES IN THE RURAL SOUTH FROM SLAVERY TO THE GREAT MIGRATION
By Steven Hahn
(Harvard University Press, 610 pp., $35)

"I STAND AT THE END OF THIS writing literally aghast at what American historians have done to this field," wrote W. E. B. Du Bois almost three-quarters of a century ago, at the conclusion of *Black Reconstruction*, his monumental study of the transition from slavery to freedom. Much of these historians' "testimony against the Negro in Reconstruction is on the unsupported evidence of men who hated and despised Negroes and regarded it as loyalty to blood, patriotism to country, and filial tribute to the fathers to lie, steal, or kill in order to discredit these black folk." In their hands, Reconstruction was little more than a "tragic era" of "Negro rule" and "savage tyranny" brought to an end only when heroic white Democrats "redeemed" their region with ballots and bullets.

It took a while—several decades, in fact—for the historical profession to come around to adopting Du Bois's views, but come around it did. Since the 1960s, most historians have accepted Du Bois's moral and analytical transposition, rendering the "slave who is being emancipated" the "real hero" of Reconstruction and the redeemers its clear-cut villains. They have also largely accepted Du Bois's objective of establishing what he called the "essential humanity of Negroes" and their goal of taking "their place as equal citizens with others." The result has been a wealth of scholarship over the past generation or so that has thoroughly revisited the related subjects of slavery, Emancipation, Reconstruction, and its aftermath. As it turns out, Du Bois has proved to be a prescient guide in certain historical areas but a misleading one in others.

Steven Hahn's book is the latest and the most ambitious of a large number of works that emphasize the "essential humanity" of African Americans and insist on their political agency in good times and bad. Although the concept of "agency" has taken a scholarly pounding over the years from those who charge that it leads to sentimentalism, romanticism, hyperbole, distorted causality, or diversion from the decisive structures of power, it continues to thrive at the historiographical grassroots. Those devoted to exploring and even celebrating the role of ordinary men and women in the making of their own history have succeeded in establishing a simple fact: that any understanding of political and economic power requires genuine attention to the broadest cast of characters, not merely a focus on elites. No action of the slaveholding class, post–Civil War planters, or "redeemer" Democrats can make sense without understanding the aspirations and the actions of those whom they sought to control.

THIS IS A COMMONPLACE OF the last generation of scholars studying nineteenth-century African American history, but few are as committed to this proposition as Hahn. "This is a book about extraordinary people who did extraordinary things under the most difficult of circumstances," he begins, "and, in the process, transformed themselves and the world in which they lived." Hahn's book is, in many ways, the culmination of a historical tendency that has been developing since the 1970s. Drawing synthetically but fruitfully on a vast scholarship on slavery, emancipation, and the New South, it will likely become required reading, if not for the general public, then at least for students of American history. Those readers will encounter an elegantly written, deeply moving, powerful statement of black humanity and black agency in the momentous struggles to end slavery and to define freedom.

Hahn's focus is on the evolution—what he calls the "making and remaking"—of African American politics and ideology (a word he usually avoids). His book is about "how African Americans in the rural South conducted politics and engaged in political struggle as slaves and as freedpeople." For decades historians have been doing just that for the postbellum era. Black participation in Reconstruction governments, their involvement in numerous post-Redemption social and political movements, and their engagement in grassroots challenges to disfranchisement and legalized segregation have

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been chronicled in countless studies. But Hahn extends his interest in politics back to the era of slavery. Insisting that southern slaves, too, must be explicitly understood as political actors "in a society that tried to refuse them that part," he maintains that such an understanding will "alter our comprehension of what happened after slavery."

Slaves were denied official standing in civil society, of course. They were deemed to lack the "very essence of political beings: the ability to express and act according to their individual and collective wills." But this did not stop them from putting forth "collective norms and aspirations," building their own small-scale institutions, participating in local market exchanges, "contesting the wills of their owners," and "forging complex ties to each other." Slaves not only built communities on and between plantations, but established formidable, vibrant "communication networks" that enabled them to transmit information—about northern abolitionists, the election of Abraham Lincoln, and the course of the Civil War itself.

On one level, these are hardly novel points. Since the 1960s, historians have produced a plethora of studies on "the slave community," in the late John Blassingame's words, or on "the world the slaves made," in Eugene Genovese's. Virtually no credible scholar of slavery has questioned the humanity and the agency of slaves since that time. Where historians have disagreed has been over the degree of autonomy that chattel slavery afforded the enslaved. Hahn sidesteps that debate (although the slaves he writes about exercise a tremendous degree of autonomy), instead redefining—or rather renaming—as "politics" those actions that others have skillfully excavated and termed "resistance." For Hahn, this is more than a semantic move: it invests with explicit political meaning most of what the enslaved did and generously expands the boundaries of the political to embrace much of daily life. But just as critics once hurled the charge of sentimentality against social and labor historians for expressly celebrating their subjects, Hahn's own depiction of slave politics is vulnerable to the charge of romanticization.

Hahn may overstate his case when he claims that this redefinition will "alter our comprehension of what happened after slavery." In its broad outlines, the story Hahn tells of freedpeople's struggles in the age of emancipation and Reconstruction resembles the narrative laid out by Leon Litwack, Eric Foner, Michael Fitzgerald, and numerous other scholars. While he persuasively emphasizes freedmen's large-scale involvement in paramilitary organizations and in a multitude of political clubs and Union Leagues that sprang up throughout the Reconstruction-era South, he cannot trace that participation directly to prewar political communities of slaves. Still, his considerable emphasis on communication networks calls our attention to the mechanisms, as weakly understood as they remain, by which slaves and freedpeople learned of the world beyond the plantation and forged common understandings that provided a basis for action.

A CASE IN POINT IS THE ENLISTment of vast numbers of black men in the Union army and the flight of as much as a quarter of the slave population. What Du Bois, in a moment of notable exaggeration, once called "the general strike," Hahn now terms "the largest slave rebellion in modern history." Those seeking refuge behind Union military lines during the Civil War not only propelled the Union toward emancipation as a war goal, but created new opportunities for political education and organizing among those who escaped. The thousands of formerly enslaved blacks who gathered in makeshift contraband camps were "hardly passive recipients of the lessons, doctrines, and discourses fashioned by various northerners," Hahn aptly observes. They shared with each other their own "fairly complex 'notions of liberty'" on matters biblical and political. When they finally returned to plantations no longer under Confederate control, they brought with them what one northern officer perceived as a new "spirit of independence—a feeling that they are no longer slaves," acquired in the contraband camps. Black enlistees (or those swept up in harsh conscription drives) made the most of their military experience, taking advantage of regimental schools in their camps to acquire basic literacy. Over the course of the war, new black soldiers were transformed into "political actors who buried slavery, secured the defeat of the Confederacy, and nourished the debate over the meaning of freedom." Even those unfortunate enough to remain behind rebel lines, argues Hahn, "struggled to keep themselves informed of military and political developments, passed and debated rumors as to their fortunes, and in a variety of ways eroded the customary manifestations of masterly authority."

Wartime news "travels pretty fast," a former Texas slave later recalled. What passed for news, however, often was more like rumor. For Hahn, this distinction is of little consequence, for rumor constituted a "political weapon" that slaves wielded "with potent effect" during the Civil War. Normally flowing "through established channels of everyday life," it "surely had much to recommend as a discursive practice," for its source was "cloaked in anonymity." Although it enabled the "articulation of aspirations and anxieties that cannot otherwise be expressed" and should be regarded as a "popular political discourse" of "expectation and anticipation," Hahn argues that it was something more: a "veritable field of political struggle in its own right."

But it was not necessarily a field that favored the slaves and freedpeople. Consider the slaves' deeply held belief in an impending redistribution of land at the war's end. Whether emancipated slaves got the idea from black Union soldiers, Freedmen's Bureau officials, ministers, or their own local leaders, contemporaries were stunned by the pervasiveness of the belief that "some great change" involving a dramatic division of property was imminent. Freedpeople "used the rumors of land redistribution to bolster their own bargaining positions," Hahn argues, as enough of them withheld their labor to create temporary labor shortages that "weakened the landowners' attempts to tie them down and dictate the terms" of work. But did this actually bolster their position? If so, Hahn doesn't show how; any improvements they had won were marginal and short-lived. Hahn convincingly argues that the "former slaves' expectations of property division" revealed "complex aspirations and sets of beliefs," but he is less persuasive on the point that rumor was an effective weapon in the struggle to define freedom's contours. As it turns out, the former slaves' unfortunate, if understandable, misreading of post–Civil War politics has had a long shelf life. Indeed, the persistent falsehood that the federal government betrayed its promise of "forty acres and a mule"—a variant of the land-redistribution rumor—continues to inspire reparations activists today.

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As inspiring as Du Bois has been for a generation of left-wing academics, he has proved less useful for charting the actual trajectory of black politics after Reconstruction. The "slave went free; stood a brief moment in the sun; then moved back again toward slavery": this was Du Bois's assessment of the impact of the "Redemption" that brought about the demise of Reconstruction. To be sure, blacks suffered mightily from the overthrow of Reconstruction and their abandonment by their erstwhile northern white allies; but as brutal as sharecropping and tenancy might have been, and as ruthless as the Redeemers were toward black Republicans, slavery was hardly re-established. Nor were black politics snuffed out with the rise of the Redeemer regimes in the 1870s and thereafter. Du Bois's eye for contemporary social movements over the course of his long life was never as sharp as his poetic insights into racial domination.

Hahn demonstrates that "African Americans in the countryside were not vanquished politically with the ending of Reconstruction." Drawing upon the work of numerous historians of labor and electoral politics, he effectively reminds us that black political activism persisted through the end of the nineteenth century, a time when white legislators in every southern state passed Jim Crow segregation statutes and disfranchisement measures in state law and constitutions. Even during what Rayford Logan enduringly termed "the nadir" of black life in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Hahn persuasively insists, rural blacks asserted themselves "along an extended political front" that contributed to a "reconfiguring [of] the political landscape." They participated in local assemblies of the Knights of Labor, in the biracial Readjuster movement in Virginia, in the Colored Farmers' Alliance, and later in the Populist Party. In short, southern rural blacks persistently pressed for "inclusion and rights," refusing to "sink into the valleys of resignation and fatalism," despite the torrent of repression meted out against them.

But changing times elicited changing responses. By the end of the nineteenth century, blacks' protests did not "partake of public militancy and defiance," nor did they involve a "movement to reclaim rights so swiftly stolen from them." As Hahn concludes, there was "no longer room" for even that. Rural black southerners turned inward, seeing their "future prospects" in "separating themselves as much as possible from southern whites." Booker T. Washington's "cast down your buckets" anti-political accommodationist strategy was one evident response, but Hahn sees as more significant a revival of popular interest in African emigrationism by the mid-1880s.

This brings us to Hahn's second distinctive argument: his identification of a powerful current of nationalism among African Americans from Emancipation through the 1920s. From the outset Hahn rejects what he characterizes as the "liberal integrationist framework." That paradigm, he believes, fails to "really incorporate slaves as political beings," treats some aspirations—inclusion, assimilation, and the "pursuit of collective rights"—as legitimate, and dismisses "separatism and community development" and "protonationalism" as the "response to failures and defeats." Hahn may exaggerate the degree to which historians have committed the sin he attributes to them, but his own perspectives and commitments are clear: in his eyes, the thrust of African American politics was, in its many forms, largely a "quest" for "self-governance" that moved in the direction of a "popular black nationalism" through community development, emigrationism, and protonationalism to the race-first nationalism of Marcus Garvey. Indeed, the case for a popular nineteenth-century protonationalism has rarely been advanced so forcefully.

The "emigrationist" sentiment of the 1870s that burst on the scene in Louisiana and spread from there demonstrates for Hahn how "permeable and interconnected the boundaries between electoral and other forms of local politics could be." Led by the freedman, laborer, and itinerant political organizer Henry Adams, these emigrationists sought, first, to "devise a general plan whereby we may become united as a race" and, second, to promote black migration to the African nation of Liberia or resettlement elsewhere in the United States. Where blacks wanted to go matters less for Hahn than what the desire to quit the South revealed about their shared political pessimism, their pursuit of "social separatism," and their "incipient popular nationalism." According to Hahn, emigrationists expressed "aspirations held by most African Americans in the southern countryside." And although relatively few southern blacks actually relocated to either Africa or Kansas, Hahn cautions that the "unimpressive demographic figures" should not "obscure the importance of emigrationism as a social and political phenomenon," one that would have "widespread and enduring repercussions."

What those consequences were, however, is not at all clear. Hahn detects a revival in interest in emigration in the mid to late 1880s, as a tiny but growing number of blacks mailed inquiries to the white American Colonization Society about the feasibility of immigrating to Africa. He finds the "separatist impulse" evident in the "black town movement" that created a number of all-black settlements across the South and Southwest. But perhaps most important for Hahn were the "early rumblings" in the mid-1880s and early 1890s of "what has come to be called 'the Great Migration'"—the steadily growing stream of southern black migrants to the North. Escape from the South, in Hahn's eyes, was not, as historians have long held, merely political—in the sense that southern blacks despaired of overcoming racial oppression and sought new political and economic opportunities elsewhere. It was, in Hahn's telling, simultaneously a clear manifestation of the separatist impulse and widespread proto-nationalist sentiment.

As one political current among many southern blacks' aspirations and agendas, the emigrationist and proto-nationalist sensibility deserves the close scrutiny Hahn gives it; but it does not warrant the pre-eminent status he assigns it. Nor does it contribute much to our understanding of the Great Migration, which brought roughly half a million southern blacks to the North during World War I and as many as seven hundred thousand more during the 1920s. This unprecedented population movement, the conventional narrative holds, was made possible by the opening up of industrial jobs in the North to blacks (in response to the cutoff of European immigration); it drew upon several decades of smaller waves of South-to-North migration and considerable intra-southern migration. To this familiar picture Hahn adds two additional claims: that the Great Migration resembled the grassroots emigrationism of the late nineteenth century; and, more controversially, that among

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those who remained behind in the South during the war and in the postwar era, the black nationalist vision of Marcus Garvey took deep root.

It "can hardly be accidental," Hahn observes, "that these [population] movements began to erupt at a time when emigrationist activity was acquiring a mass base" or that in the Great Migration "we can detect striking resemblances to the grassroots emigrationism of an earlier period." Newspapers and labor agents alerted potential migrants to possibilities elsewhere; family members together deliberated their course of action; visits and letters from those who had previously left proved enlightening; churches and fraternal lodges debated, sometimes pooled limited resources, and facilitated group migration. Nineteenth-century emigrationism and the twentieth-century Great Migration shared "collective sensibilities, social networks, organizational activism, and circuits of communication and deliberation."

Yet these mechanisms, which Hahn rightly sees as evidence of the dense communication webs, social networks, and associational impulses within black communities, were hardly the resources of southern blacks alone. Perhaps it is a testament to the persistent segregation of African American and immigration history that the differences in immigrant and racial group experiences continue to outweigh the similarities. But countless immigrants from the southern and eastern European countryside similarly learned of new prospects in America and engaged in comparable processes of information collection, familial and community decision-making, and migration back and forth across the Atlantic in ways that would not be unfamiliar to southern blacks. Like their European counterparts, southern migrants sought economic security as well as political liberty and educational opportunity for their children, all of which were denied to them in their own region. To say this is not to diminish the significance of the unique racial violence and oppression suffered by southern African Americans; but it does suggest that many southern blacks, like millions of immigrants from abroad, had good reasons for wanting to leave their homes to start anew and build new communities elsewhere. Those reasons cannot be reduced to an ideology, to a unique political emigrationism, to proto-nationalist sentiment, or to a separatist impulse to escape white control.

A Mantis

Rapt in her layered leaves, lit by an inner light,
She does not stir.
She's dropped into a trance so deep
It looks devout, and, yes,
This *is* religious zeal—though focused less
On providence than provender.
She prays purely for prey: *Don't let me go to sleep*
Hungry tonight.

BRAD LEITHAUSER

BUT WHAT OF BLACK NATIONalism and the appeal of Marcus Garvey? Few historical figures in American history have been credited with accomplishing so much on the basis of so little evidence. Garvey claimed to have created the largest mass movement in African American history, and many historians have tended to accept his self-promotion uncritically. Although no reliable figures for membership in Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association exist, Hahn joins the mainstream in suggesting that his following "in the United States alone may have exceeded one million." Hahn goes further, however, when he argues that although "Garvey's movement is generally understood to have taken hold largely in the black urban North, its most extensive bases were in fact to be found in the rural and small-town South," for half the UNIA's divisions were located there by the mid-1920s and with the "greatest pulse" felt "in the countryside."

This is an audacious claim, promising a radical re-assessment not only of Garveyism but also of black political "consciousness" in the South. The problem is that the evidence for such a re-assessment is in extremely short supply. Hahn has little to say about the size, the programs, or the durability of those locals. "Relative secrecy in the conduct of business was undoubtedly desirable," Hahn concludes, and the "UNIA in the rural and small-town South may be regarded as a political underground of activity and education, rarely attracting public notice." Southern Garveyites "did not generally stage the parades, processions, and mass assemblies" that their northern counterparts did. This, he informs us, is why southern Garveyism "has largely escaped later scholarly detection." Nor, apparently, did Garveyites leave behind much of a paper trail that allows us to test Hahn's hypothesis. He nonetheless concludes that Garvey's views "comported" with black rural southerners' "own experiences," while the "perspective of the fledgling" NAACP "had little appeal."

Hahn does not even entertain the argument, initially advanced by Judith Stein in the 1980s and more recently by Steven Reich, that Garvey's organizational nemesis, the NAACP, grew dramatically in the South during World War I and the immediate postwar years, as working-class blacks in cities and on the land flooded onto its membership rolls. The alternative explanation—that Garveyism's roots in the South were shallow and the movement itself but a shadow of its northern counterpart—simply is not considered. And, sidestepping the matter of a growing NAACP, Hahn argues only indirectly, by analogy, to establish Garveyism's southern influence.

Garvey's ideas, he writes, were not only "sweeping and internationalist, remarkably bold in the vision of racial solidarity and identity that they offered"; they also "seemed very close to a great many African Americans, especially to those from the South." Hahn establishes a political genealogy that directly connects Garvey to Paul Cuffe, David Walker, Martin Delaney, and Alexander Crummell. Equally important, the beliefs in "separatism, self-governance, family and community uplift, racial solidarity, and perhaps relocation" were "nourished very much at the grassroots." Undoubtedly many southern blacks admired these men and shared, to varying degrees, these beliefs. But it is impossible to identify many rural Garvey supporters clearly, much less to connect their ideas to the nationalist tradition, for few southern Garveyites actually speak or even appear in Hahn's pages. As Judith Stein argued, the "nearly four hundred UNIA divisions and chapters in the South testified that Garvey had been there but not much else." Little that Hahn writes alters that conclusion. Moreover, Garveyism is largely drained of its actual politics or political ideas: Garvey's specific beliefs on political economy, African colonization, Christian uplift, race relations, and

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even the Ku Klux Klan (Garvey's meeting with a top Klan leader was not exactly a public-relations triumph) are displaced onto a presumed pro-Garveyite sentiment that is difficult to detect and impossible to measure.

If Hahn's vision of politics is generously expansive on one level, it is curiously constricted on another. What we would recognize in *A Nation Under Our Feet* as conventional kinds of politics (parties, coalitions, and elections) as well as newer kinds of politics ("community building") largely revolve around interracial conflict: masters struggle against slaves, white Democrats against African American Republicans, white Republicans against black Republicans, white planters against emancipated black laborers.

Much of southern political conflict unquestionably was interracial in character. But some of it was unequivocally intraracial, as Michael Fitzgerald has recently shown in his splendid and entirely unromantic study *Urban Emancipation: Popular Politics in Reconstruction Mobile, 1860–1890*. Just as southern whites never spoke with a single voice, neither did enslaved or emancipated African Americans and their descendants. Political positions are not determined by racial position. African American elected officials, voters, trade unionists, sharecroppers, landowners, newspaper editors, and ministers and their congregations often differed sharply among themselves over not merely the best course of action to pursue but also over the very definition of "self-governance" and "community building."

The specific content of local black politics—what black southerners believed and argued about, often passionately—mattered deeply, often fueling intense local conflicts between rival factions. And intraracial politics of the conventional kind could be messy business indeed. With grandiose political dreams, factional balances of power, and desperately desired patronage positions all hanging in the balance, black politicians and their supporters could come to blows at the rough-and-tumble ward level. That story, not surprisingly, is a less heroic or noble one than the struggle against white Democrats or fickle white Republican allies, but it is indispensable to an understanding of the tenor and outcome of local politics during and after Reconstruction.

Did external white oppression fundamentally unite black southerners regardless of education, wealth, or social standing, creating the "strongest bonds" between people "across class lines," as one scholar has put it? Or did that very heterogeneity translate into meaningful ideological or programmatic differences? Hahn is mindful that southern rural blacks pursued no single agenda. He reveals as much in his succinct examinations of the rare black Democrat (who received violent treatment at the hands of his more ardent Republican fellows) and the opposition of elite blacks (those whom Hahn disparagingly calls the " 'professional' politicians") to sharecroppers' migration to Kansas in 1878–1879. Yet while he promises to consider the "tensions and conflicts that erupted" within black communities "owing to specific relations of power, to rivalries nurtured by intense localism and competing kinship groups ... and to divisions between what may be called plantation-based and franchise-based styles of politics and political leadership," he quickly backs off to pursue the theme of the "quest" for "self-governance."

Here Hahn's story of black resistance and dedication to family and community has an overwhelmingly positive, affirming feel to it. While careful to catalogue white terrorist campaigns, stolen elections, and the daily indignities imposed upon black southerners, he ultimately offers up an inspiring, at times uplifting saga that contrasts sharply with the darker, more pessimistic and depressing chronicles of black life under Jim Crow produced by Leon Litwack or Neil McMillan in the late 1980s and the 1990s. African Americans' talk of "becoming a 'race,' a 'people,' ... or a 'nation,' " Hahn argues, meant "having the opportunity to create communities in which collections of families could find and farm land independently, in which authority would emanate chiefly from within their own ranks and according to their own rules, in which their institutions could have room to develop, in which they could venture forth without fear and meet others on a basis of mutual respect." Hahn is correct to stress what historians have identified as the universal desire of African Americans to be free of white control, particularly in moments of intensified white violence and domination. But the showcasing of this impulse as the dominant theme in postbellum black history comes at a cost of downplaying the multiple lines of division within black communities and treating the black "community" as more of a monolith than it was.

Steven Hahn's generous expansion of the boundaries of the political has enriched our understandings of the textures of black life and the nature of black resistance, but we should not allow it to divert our attention from the complex and sometimes contradictory content of black political thought and the competing ideological currents that animated it. A fuller appreciation of the heterogeneity of black southerners' aspirations, motives, and programs may produce a less romantic portrait, but one that nonetheless effectively recognizes the agency and "essential humanity" of the emancipated slave who is the "real hero" of Du Bois's, and Steven Hahn's, saga. ■

CORRESPONDENCE

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platforms that appealed to whites as well as blacks. Equally revealing is the fact that neither Moseley Braun nor Obama was successfully able to follow the traditional path to the Senate—by first winning election to the U.S. House of Representatives. Obama tried and failed to oust Representative Bobby Rush from a district that contains Hyde Park and several all-black wards. In the end, though, his failed bid probably enhanced his chances for the Senate. Because of that defeat, Obama—like Moseley Braun—ran for the Senate with only a minor office as his highest level of experience. If Obama had beaten Rush, he may have been forced to take positions that would preclude him from assuaging the concerns of white voters (consider, for example, that Rush is an outspoken advocate of reparations for slavery). By attempting to jump from a minor position to statewide office, Obama—like Moseley Braun before him—may very well escape the dilemma facing black politicians. Ambitious black politicians may not need an African name or an Ivy League resumé; they just need an end to racial gerrymandering of congressional districts, a practice that, given its origins in the Voting Rights Act of 1965, paradoxically seems to prevent black candidates from attaining high office.

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HAVANA DIARIST

Same Old

When Fidel Castro starts to speak, he sounds choked up, moving slowly through each sentence. "It seems," he begins, "that this gathering," pauses, "has broken," pauses again, "all the records." Castro tells us that we, the people assembled for his May 1, 2004, speech in the Plaza de la Revolución, are a colossal crowd. People wave little paper Cuban flags, filling the air with flapping. Long before Castro approaches the microphone at 9 a.m., Cubans have been loading onto buses and filing into the enormous plaza. I was more than curious to join the crowd. Having lived in Cuba for seven months on a fellowship, I could count the number of devout *revolucionarios* I'd met on one hand, and I was also aware that the government—through jobs or schools—pressures people to attend. When a Cuban friend invited me to an all-night pre–May Day rally at the University of Havana, I eagerly went along.

In the university courtyard, the party was raging by 1 a.m. I asked my friend if anyone really wanted to show up. She shook her head. "But, since there's music and dancing, ... people come." While we observed the crowd, she pointed out "your people"—Americans. They're everywhere. The largest group of foreign students at the University of Havana is from the United States. Neither country makes it easy—they must fly through Cancun and live in isolated housing—but they come in hordes. When the music stopped, we all went to the university's historic steps, a gathering place for protests in the Batista era. The significance cannot be lost on young Cubans. The government keeps memories of the Revolution alive: DOWN WITH BATISTA—MURDERER is painted on a house facing the steps.

We march through a dark city with policemen lining the route. My section of the crowd is the Arts and Letters department—or, more precisely, Arts and Letters majors in the Young Communists Union. Students who don't join the Union risk hurting their job prospects; many join begrudgingly. But the Union does have its true believers. Within our section, a serious-looking student keeps track of all attendees. He seems perturbed that the Tourism majors are showing up Arts and Letters with their cheers. We arrive at the Plaza by 4 a.m., just as my legs begin to feel like liquid. Inside its gate, I am surprised to find bodies stretched as far as I can see. The early arrivers are sprawled out, leaving no path for those behind them. It's a mess. Cubans push and complain about the ubiquitous Venezuelans, who are snapping photos and seem genuinely excited—the Venezuelans are just getting a revolution going, not carrying around the flag of their grandparents. I crash on the cement and later open my eyes to a bright sky. The Union leader motions to my friend to stand. She rolls her eyes but gets up. I don't have to worry about my conduct grade in the Communist Party, so I stay seated until I hear the words "*comandante en jefe*." A soft "FI-del" chant starts, but doesn't pick up much momentum. Castro clears his throat into the microphone, pauses, and begins.

Castro is famous for long speeches. In earlier years, he often went on for six hours straight, though old age has shortened the diatribes. Yet, when Castro begins his speech with the theme of American hypocrisy, I have a feeling we're in for a long one. Castro denounces countries that are subservient to the United States, saving praise for Cuba and Venezuela. "Some day," he muses, "they'll have to construct a monument for those countries that ... risked everything and voted against the Yankee projects." Castro moves on to today's global conflicts. The striking thing about Castro's year in review, aside from the way he pronounces President Bush's name as if exhaling a ball of fire ("Booosh"), is that he alternates between playing commentator and narrator. He seems to assume, and correctly so, that listeners are not abreast of world events. Though Cuba's leader has an intense interest in foreign affairs—he devours foreign newspapers—Cuban journalism offers little more about the outside world than slim anti-American propaganda. Many Cubans avoid the newspaper put out by the Communist Party. In any event, due to the awful economic situation, few Cubans have the luxury of thinking beyond dinner.

There are times, however, when I think Castro is not speaking to us. The longer he dwells on foreign affairs, the more I get the feeling he would rather slip his speech under the door of the Oval Office. This is why Castro loses his audience—even the young Union leader sneaks off before the speech finishes. Schooled in Castro's view of world affairs for decades, the Cubans have heard it all before: The big bad imperial power has been on the verge of invading for 50 years. But half their families are in Florida, and Cubans know what life is like stateside. ("Carlos mops floors in Tampa and was able to buy a car in less than a year!" Cubans often say.) Castro gave Cuba its pride back, but they're over it. Now people are interested in living better.

This is not to say that Castro is a bore. You can feel his charm when he jokingly calls his May Day address a *discursito*, or little speech, an hour after approaching the podium, and people chuckle. And Castro is still sharp. When I crouch down to rest my feet, I find a Cuban friend of mine, equally exhausted, on the pavement. "We're in our twenties and can barely get by without a night's rest. He could go on for hours and hours without a wink of sleep, and the man's seventy-seven," he says, pointing at the podium with admiration.

Castro does eventually wrap up, and the crowd spills into the streets. As I watch people packing onto rickety old buses, I am struck by how much the May Day routine typifies today's Cuba: conditions everyone complains about, politics falling on tired ears, police infiltrating everything, and, of course, the same enduring legend keeping it all in one piece. I won't be surprised if Castro begins next year's May Day speech with the same slow sentence. The Cubans will wave their paper flags and go home to sleep off the hearty dose of politics so they can get back to getting by.

COLLEEN KINDER

Colleen Kinder is on a public service fellowship in Cuba.

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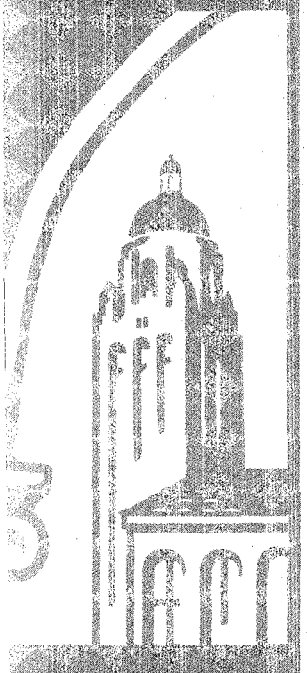

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Because the administration argued against the two specific University of Michigan affirmative action plans before the Supreme Court last year, few appreciated at the time how much of the constitutional principle of Equal Protection it was willing to sacrifice. For example, Solicitor General Theodore Olson argued in his brief, "[T]his case requires this Court to break no new ground," in effect conceding that race preferences to achieve diversity, articulated in the Bakke case a generation ago, remained good law. And, said Olson, while not considering race per se, a school might consider such matters as "a history of overcoming disadvantage, geographic origin, socioeconomic status, challenging living or family situation," and a host of other technically race-neutral factors. Got the point (wink, wink)?

The solicitor also pointed with pride to the "percentage plan," adopted by Texas under the Bush governorship. The plan got around a circuit court decision barring race-conscious university admissions by automatically admitting high school students from any public high school graduating in the top 10 percent of their class.

Now comes word, via the *New York Times,* of widespread dissatisfaction with the Texas percentage plan. The reason is the plan's built-in bias in favor of students' graduating from low-achievement schools and against those in the tougher academic institutions where many superior students fail to make the top 10 percent. As a result, many turned down by the flagship University of Texas take their talents to other states.

This problem was totally predictable at the time the law was passed, as were many others inherent in percentage plans. For one thing, to "cure" the racial imbalance problem, they rely on a foundation of de facto segregated high schools. For another, they have no applicability to graduate schools or to private or out-of-state high schools.

The diversity approach sanctioned by the Court, to which dozens of colleges and universities are now scrambling to adjust, has its own set of problems. **Diversity itself is a vague concept since it can relate to philosophical viewpoint, religious conviction, and areas of academic interest as easily as to race or ethnicity.** Diversity is also subject to diminishing returns. The first African American in a history or political science course arguably could bring important perspectives to bear on many subjects. But what about the 2nd? Or the 17th? And suppose the course were biology? Or chemical engineering? Or medicine? There is at this point overwhelming evidence that affirmative action at medical schools has produced lower-achieving students who take longer to graduate, do less well on the medical boards, and materially less well in qualifying to practice their specialties.

As a matter of principle I continue to oppose the allocation of rights and rewards based on race. I wish the administration had shown a bit more spunk in the leading Michigan cases. But a decade of attention to this area also persuades me that this society is unwilling to accept the results of a race-neutral approach—without gimmicks or outright intellectual fraud—to college admissions. For that reason I believe the least harmful approach is a straightforward affirmative action plan modified to avert harm to innocent nonminority students. This could be achieved by enrolling one nonminority student who would otherwise have been rejected for each minority student enrolled through affirmative action. **It is time to restore integrity to issues of race and university admissions.**

—Robert Zelnick

Robert Zelnick is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and chairman of the Department of Journalism at Boston University.

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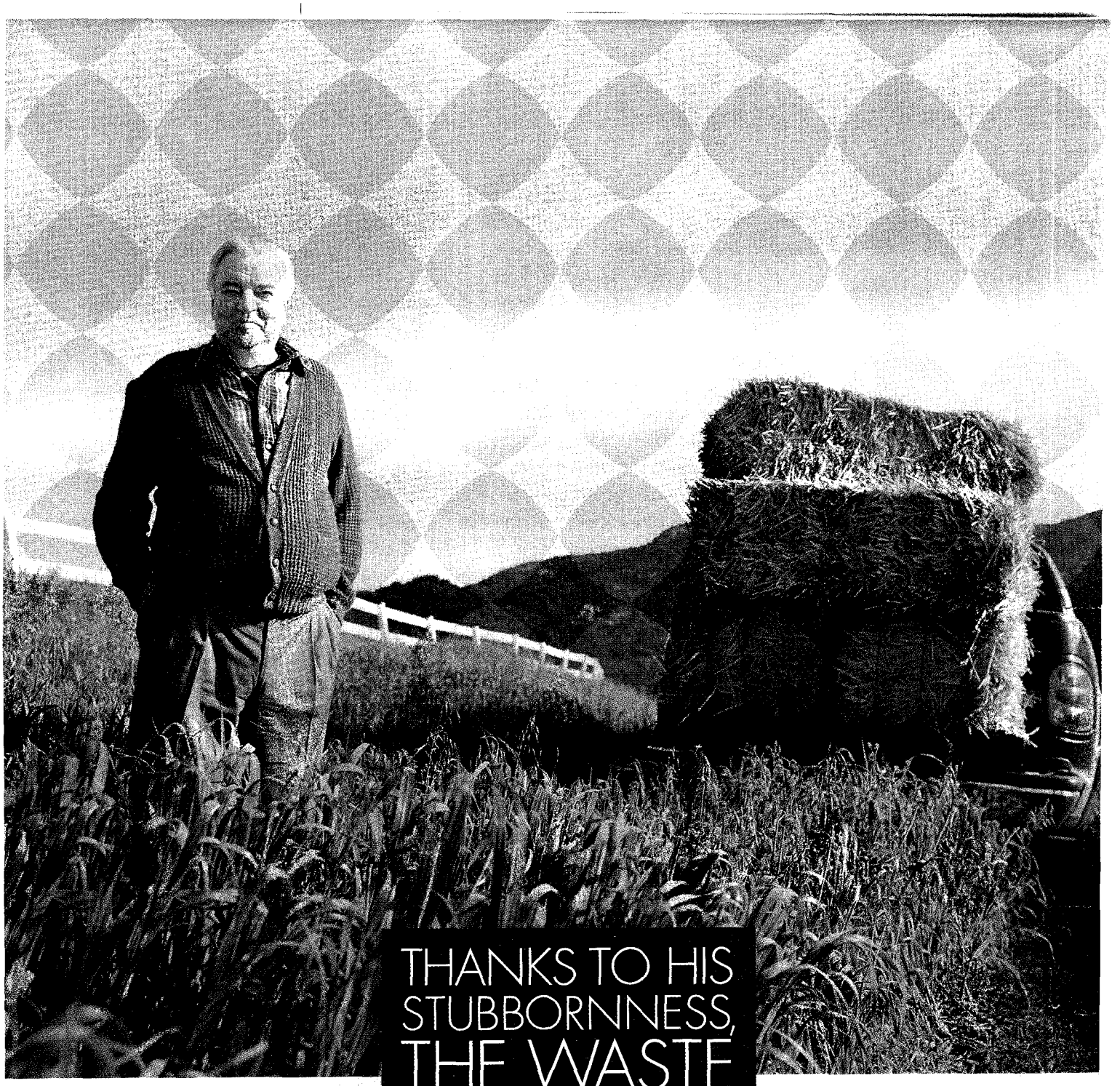

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